ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Crown Copyright documents reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, London, England.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The National Archives give no warranty as to the accuracy, completeness or fitness for the purpose of the information provided.

Images may be used only for purposes of research, private study or education. Applications for any other use should be made to The National Archives Image Library, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU.

EASTERN

F.O.
371

1948

PALESTINE

FILE No. 341

68640

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948 | PALESTINE | E 341

Registry Number E 341/341/31

FROM War office

No. Confmd.

Dated

Received in Registry 8 Jan.

Disposal of French Detainees in Kenya.

C.C. NEAF to 43396 9011 of 5 Jan.

Gives views of East Africa and Palestine on question of disposal of French Detainees held in Kenya. Note for G.O. discussion on subject.

Last Paper.

12051/1184/11.47

References.

68640

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

It is not clear that this question concerns the Foreign Office.

(T.E. CABLE)

JB Jan 9

In P.P. W.O. to 04822 (M04) & B.B. NEAF 9/1

JB Jan 13

In C.C. NEAF Africa 27

JB 27/1

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

E 383

26513 F.O.P.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

CIPHER TELEGRAM

The text of this message must be paraphrased if it is necessary to communicate it to persons outside British Government Service or to retransmit it in a cipher system other than O.T.P. This message will not be referred to in any Unclassified message.

Note. **The above notice will be reproduced on any copies made of this message.**

Recd:- 23 Jan 48.

From:- C.in C. M.E.L.F. D.T.O. 221200B Jan.

To:- War Office.

Info:- G.O.C. in C. East Africa.
G.O.C. Palestine & Transjordan.

344 344 71

IMMEDIATE.

TOP SECRET. 49321 G(O)1. INDEXED

Ref your 04822 (MO4) of 10 January. 48.

One. We fully agree with your para 3(A) and (B) and after consulting GOC Palestine consider that the method of dealing with these detainees would be to return them to Palestine at latest feasible date before final military evacuation. On arrival they would be interned in Haifa Enclave. On date of final evacuation. UNO and Jewish State would be presented with problem of their future disposal.

Two. We do not know the political and legal reaction to this proposal but from military point of view it appears to be best possible solution.

Three. Grateful your earliest agreement to above proposal.

Message Control.

Copies to:- [illegible]
[illegible] of S.
[illegible].G.S.
[illegible].I.
[illegible]
[illegible], 4(10).
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
D.S.D.
D.D.S.D.(A).
S.D.2.
V.[illegible]
D of [illegible].
G(Ops)1.
D.[illegible].
D.D.[illegible].(B).
Q.6.

Distribution [illegible]
[illegible] ov.
D.D. [illegible] ov.
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
P.[illegible] Co-ord.
Foreign Office (Mr Macdermott).
Colonial Office (Mr Stafford-Smith).
MI5 in [illegible] Dpt.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E 141/141/21 INDEXED
13 JAN 1948

ONE TIME PAD

BM/2125(MO4)

From :- The War Office

To :- C-in-C MELF

DTO 091200 Z/Jan

Desp. 9 Jan. '48.

TOP SECRET 04822 (MO4)

One . Reference your 43396 G(O)1 cipher of 6 Jan .

The future of the 290 Jewish detainees held in Kenya will be one of the questions to be discussed between U.N. Commission and the Colonial Office representatives who are leaving for America within a few days for that purpose .

Two . Although HMG are bound to discuss this question with U.N. Commission decision will not necessarily depend upon desires of Commission . We reserve the right to look after our own interests .

Three . If they are brought to Palestine in near future difficulty will arise when Mandate is given up because :-

(a) It is most improbable that U.N. Commission or any other authority apart from ourselves would be prepared to hold them in custody .

(b) Even if we overcame legal difficulty of holding them ourselves the added commitments entailed would presumably be unwelcome to you .

If they were released into Palestine on termination of Mandate they would be a strong reinforcement for IZL and Stern .

Four . We should be grateful for your views on the best method of dealing with these 290 Jews in the light of para three above .

Message Control.

IMPORTANT

/Copies to:-

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Copies to:- S of S
US of S
CIGS
VCIGS
DMO
MO 1, 4(10)
DMI
DDMI(I)
MI 1, 3.
DSD
DDSD(A)
SD 2
VQMG
D of AP
Q(Ops)1
DQ
DDQ(B)
Q 6
DD Mov(F)
Col Mov(F)
Q(M)2
PUS
DF(a)
F 1
DF(c)
WF
QMGF
DPR
PR (Co-ord)
Foreign Office (Mr.McDermott
Colonial Office(Mr.Trafford-Smith)
MI 5
Ministry of Transport.

12 JAN 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

TOP SECRET

CIPHER TELEGRAM

417831

This message will not be distributed outside British Government Departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted, even in cipher, without being paraphrased. (Messages marked O.T.P. need not be paraphrased.)

E 341

8 JAN

From:- C. in C. MELF.

Recd 6 Jan 48

D.T.O. 050935 Jan

To :- War Office

Info:- GOC. Palestine & Transjordan. GOC. in C. East Africa

IMPORTANT

TOP SECRET. 43396 G(O)1

Subject is disposal of Jewish detainees held in Kenya.

One. In view of the forthcoming termination of British mandate in Palestine we have been investigating question of early return to Palestine of the approx 290 Jewish detainees held in Kenya. We feel that the termination of the mandate would render illegal any subsequent detention in Kenya.

Two. East Africa wishes to return these detainees to Palestine earliest. Recent cut in African manpower ceiling will further restrict East Africas ability to meet gd commitment for detainees as well as to retain reserve for internal security role. Moreover if they are not returned before termination of the mandate there seems danger that United Nations commission or new Jewish state might refuse to accept them. East Africa might then be burdened with this commitment indefinitely.

Three. Palestine Govt on other hand consider that since these Jews are detained by virtue of laws of Kenya their detention can remain valid until order is revoked or varied. They consider early return would be most undesirable addition to security problem and desire return to be postponed until after completion of evacuation of British tps. They further consider that future of these detainees should in any case be discussed with United Nations commission as it is bound up with future of other detainees now in Palestine.

Four. Decision appears to rest with Colonial Office and depends /partly on.....

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

partly on legal basis for detention of these detainees both now and in future. Request therefore that Colonial Office be approached and that we receive instrs earliest regarding disposal of Jewish detainees now in Kenya

Message Control.

Distribution by M.O.4.
To:- M.O.4.(for action)

Copies to:-
S. of S.
U.S. of S.
C.I.G.S.
V.C.I.G.S.
D.M.O.
M.O.1.4(10).
D.M.I.
D.D.M.I.(I).
M.I.1.3.
D.S.D.
D.D.S.D.(A).
S.D.2.
V.Q.M.G.
D. of A.P.
Q(Ops)1.
D.Q.
D.D.Q.(B).
Q.6.
D.P.Mov.
D.D.P.Mov.
Q(M)2.
P.U.S.
D.F.(a).
F.1.
D.F.(c).
W.F.

Q.M.G.F.
D.P.R.
P.R.(Co-ord).
Foreign Office (Mr. McDermot).
Colonial Off ce (Mr. Stafford-Smith).
M.I.5.
Ministry of Transport.

JAN 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948

E

PALESTINE

E 2333

18 FEB 1948

6

Registry Number E 2333/341/31

FROM Tilighman

No. Colonial Office

Dated

Received in Registry 14 Feb 18

Disposal of French Detainees in Kenya.

Meeting will be held 17 Feb to discuss question of disposal of French Detainees held in Kenya.

Feb French the problem, gives views of War Office and Colonial Office.

Last Paper.

383

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

Now attach results of meeting recently sent for entry

JB Feb. 19

P.P. Col. Off. Journal 6/9/36 17/2

This was the solution I advocated. (a) We should inform the UNC that we proposed to bring these people back to Palestine in July. (b) If the UNC demurred we should have to take them back before May 15, while we still had jurisdiction (c) if the UNC concurred we could wait, as proposed, till July. This would

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

2936

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

would avoid the undesirable situation which would arise if we took these dangerous men back caches and had to hold them incarcerated — a target for an 12L raid

Action is being taken accordingly

J. R. Bennett

Mr Beeley

Feb. 20

J. Balfour 20/2

Feb 3. 3/3

I.A.P.B.	P.O. Ltd & Kenya	136	21/2
–	Kenya Ltd & P.O.	137	26/2
–	P's Line Ltd	484	27/2

JB Mr Bo

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

TOP SECRET

E

E 2033

18 FEB 1948

OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

WORKING PARTY

Disposal of Jewish Detainees held in Kenya

1. A meeting will be held in Conference Room F Cabinet Office, Great George Street at 11 a.m. on Tuesday the 17th of February to discuss the question of the disposal of Jewish detainees held in Kenya. The War Office, Colonial Office, Foreign Office, Ministry of Transport, and Admiralty are invited to send representatives.

The Problem.

2. There are 291 suspected terrorists detained in Gil Gil camp Kenya, where they have been since March, 1947. Previously they had been held in a camp near Asmara, but owing to political and security considerations (in particular the escape of certain detainees in August, 1946) it had been found necessary to move them to Kenya. The question now to be decided is when these people are to be moved from Kenya, what is to happen to them on their arrival in Palestine and what is to be said to the United Nations Commission concerning them.

War Office view.

3. The Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F. has stated that, after consulting G.O.C. Palestine, he considers that the best method of dealing with the detainees would be to return them to Palestine at the latest possible date before the final military evacuation, and that on arrival they should be detained in the Haifa enclave. On the date of final evacuation their future disposal would become a matter for the United Nations Commission and the Jewish State. The War Office support the Commander-in-Chief's views and emphasise the necessity of delaying their arrival in Palestine to the last possible moment;

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

18 FEB 1948
SENT TO DEPT.
18 FEB 1948

moment; the War Office point out that, although these Jews have not been convicted by the courts there is no doubt that they were all at one time members of terrorist organisations and that after some 5 years of detention they are in bitter and revengeful mood and would be likely, if released in Palestine, to make it their primary duty to attack British soldiers and installations.

Colonial Office views.

(a) The High Commissioner considers that the return for detention in Palestine before the termination of the Mandate of these Jews would be a most undesirable edition to his security problems while their return and release before completion of military withdrawal would certainly make this more difficult.

(b) The Governor of Kenya is unwilling to retain the detainees beyond the 15th of May and considers that they should be en route for Palestine long enough before that date to ensure that they reach their destination not later than that date. He considers that if any other course were to be adopted the detainees would make a point of creating incidents which would necessitate force being used to keep order. There will also be strong public reaction to such a state of affairs in Kenya. A more recent telegram from Kenya states that the Director of Medical Services, on a recent visit to the camp, reported that the atmosphere was most disturbing and that he and the Commandant feared that unless some definite information regarding their return could be given at an early date, unfortunate incidents could not be avoided.

/(c)

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(c) Colonial Office consider that Kenya Ordinance under which these men are detained could be used to cover their detention pending arrangements for their release, even though some temporary detention was required after the termination of the Mandate. Anything further than this would be most difficult to justify.

(d) Present Kenya legislation would not cover deportation of the detainees after the 15th of May and it would be necessary to enact a special law. While the legislation would undoubtedly be passed, the Government would equally certainly come under heavy criticism for having permitted this state of affairs to arise.

(e) It is doubtful whether we should be entitled in law to bring these people into Palestine after the 15th of May without the consent of the U.N. Commission either expressed or implicit. It is unlikely that this point will give rise to difficulty.

(f) Once the detainees are inside the Haifa enclave after the 15th of May the G.O.C. will be entitled to take such action against them as he considers necessary for safeguarding his Forces and his withdrawal. Internationally, the Foreign Office Legal Advisers feel that they are safe enough on the general question of the G.O.C.'s powers, and we have given the military indemnity against action in a British Court in the draft Palestine Bill, 1948.

(g) It is possible that to detain these people in the enclave would encourage heavy attacks from the I.Z.L. on the enclave in an effort to liberate their

/colleages;

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

colleagues; this might result in a more difficult security situation than the actual release of the men in the Jewish area.

4. In brief the Colonial Office view is that the detainees must be out of Kenya not later than the 15th of May and that, if the G.O.C. decides that he must detain them in the enclave and cannot permit their release in the Jewish area, his position is sufficiently covered legally. It would be necessary to inform the United Nations Commission of our intention and this should be done at an early date. It is not however proposed that the concurrence of the U.N.C. should be sought although of course any violent reaction from the U.N.C. would call for reconsideration (but not necessarily modification) of our decision.

Other considerations

5. The Governor of Kenya has reported that both he and the S.I.M.E. are satisfied that the detainees can be moved to Palestine without military escort. The Governor proposes that Colonel Rice, the present Camp Commandant, with two Assistant Superintendents and ten Inspectors of the present camp staff who have been specially selected because they get on well with and are respected by the detainees should accompany them from Gil Gil to Palestine. The Colonial Office have also asked the Governor whether Colonel Rice, and as many of his Force as possible, would be likely to agree to volunteer to stay in Palestine until the 1st of August to assist in the administration of the detention camp.

6. The Governor has also suggested that the ship allocated for the purpose need not be a guard ship and should be as comfortable as reasonably possible. It may however be thought preferable to take no risks and to use one of the fitted transports now employed for carrying illegal immigrants to Cyprus.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

7. The Admiralty have been invited to attend the Working Party in case they have any comments as regards the possible escorting of the transport and the question of passage through the Suez Canal.

J.D. Higham

Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

14th February, 1948.

Lt. Col. G.G. Sherman	-	Cabinet Office
Lt. Col. M.M. Charteris	-	War Office (M.O.4)
Mr. J.G.S. Beith	-	Foreign Office
Mr. F.C. Rennie	-	Ministry of Transport
Mr. G.C.B. Dodds	-	Admiralty
Major D.J. Scherr	-	M.I.5.
Mr. I.D. Robertson	-	Colonial Office

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT)

S E C R E T

Ref: 6/9/36

COPY NO. 2

MR. LUKE, Cabinet Office
MR. J.G.S. BEITH, Foreign Office
MR. J.D. HIGHAM, Colonial Office
MR. I.D. ROBERTSON, Colonial Office
MR. A.G. POCKETT, Ministry of Transport
COLONEL CHARTERIS, M.O.4, War Office
CAPTAIN F. LAMB, War Office

INDEXED

OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE: WORKING PARTY

The following record of the conclusions of the Working Party at their meeting on 17th February is circulated for information.

2. The Working Party considered a paper prepared by the Colonial Office and dated 14th February, on the question of the disposal of Jewish detainees held in Kenya. The Colonial Office pointed out that there were 291 suspect terrorists detained in Gil Gil camp, Kenya, where they had been since March 1947. The question now to be decided was when these people were to be moved from Kenya, what was to happen to them on their arrival in Palestine, and what is to be said to the United Nations Commission concerning them.

Conclusions

(1) Subject to the views of higher authority the Colonial Office would inform the Governor of Kenya that:-

(a) it is the firm intention of His Majesty's Government to arrange for the transfer of the Jewish detainees to ensure their arrival in Palestine not later than 1st August 1948. The present intention is to effect transfer during July, but the final date is dependent on the availability of shipping, and might require review in the light of further developments;

(b) The Jewish detainees should be informed that it will not be possible to arrange for their transfer to Palestine before the Mandate is terminated, but that arrangements will be made for their transfer before British forces are finally withdrawn from Palestine on 1st August;

(c) Instructions will be issued to the United Kingdom Delegation in New York to approach the United Nations Commission with the object of informing them of our intentions regarding the transfer of the Jewish detainees.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(a) [illegible] it might be necessary to make [illegible] their transfer prior to the termination of the Mandate, since we have no legal right to effect such a transfer after this date in the face of opposition from the United Nations Commission.

(2) The Colonial Office would inform the High Commissioner for Palestine of the proposals outlined in Conclusion (1) above, and would instruct their representatives in New York to approach the United Nations Commission on the lines indicated in (1)(c) above. A suitable draft telegram to New York would be cleared with the Foreign Office prior to despatch.

(3) The Ministry of Transport could not undertake to provide the necessary shipping required on any specific date, but they would naturally do their best to comply with any request made to them. Further, the Ministry of Transport could not guarantee that one of the fitted cargo vessels at present in use as transport for the illegal Jewish immigrants to Cyprus could be used for the purpose of transferring the detainees from Kenya to Palestine. The Ministry of Transport were most anxious to get back these ships for general employment elsewhere, if possible by 1st May.

(4) Subject to the views of the Governor of Kenya, the War Office would inform the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Land Forces, of the proposals outlined in conclusion (1) above.

(5) The Working Party generally agreed that the detainees should be returned to Palestine at the latest possible date before the military evacuation. On the question of whether or not they should be detained in the Haifa enclave on arrival in Palestine, it was generally felt that this was a matter for the G.O.C., Palestine, to decide, in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time. The view was expressed that to detain these people in the enclave would encourage heavy attacks by the Irgun Zvai Leumi, and therefore the G.O.C. might well be advised to liberate them.

(Signed) G. C. SHERMAN.

Cabinet Office,
S.W.1.

17TH FEBRUARY, 1948.

Copy to Mr. Newling,
Ministry of Defence.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[redacted]

This document must be paraphrased if the communication of its contents to any person outside Government Service is authorised.

Cypher

FROM PALESTINE (General Sir A. Cunningham)

INDEXED

D. 27th February, 1948.
R. 27th " " 19.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

2333 741 21
-3 MAR 1948

No.484 Top Secret.

Addressed S. of S.
Repeated Governor Kenya No.510.

Your telegram No.669 and Kenya telegram No.137.

I have discussed with the G.O.C. who does not propose to detain the Jews in question if they (corrupt group ?arrive) about the middle of July. Since, however, they would constitute a danger to the security of British troops here if they arrived in Palestine earlier and were at liberty here, it is important that earlier arrival should be avoided. In the circumstances (corrupt group (?I agree that) Commission should be informed as proposed in paragraph 4 of your telegram.

Distributed to:-
R.243
Secretary of State
Sir T. Lloyd
Mr. Rees-Williams
Sir S. Caine
Sir C. Jeffries
Mr. Holding
Mr. Martin
Mr. Trafford Smith
Mr. Gutch
Mr. Mathieson
Mr. Higham
Mr. Galsworthy
Mr. Holmer
Mr. Dale
Mr. Cohen
Mr. J.H. Wallace
Mr. I.D. Robertson
War Office (M.O.4.) - Lt. Col. Charteris.
Foreign Office - Mr. Beith.
Ministry of Transport - Mr. F.C. Rennie.
" " " - Mr. A.G. Pockett.
Admiralty - Mr. G.C.B. Dodds.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

This document must be paraphrased if the communication of its contents to any person outside Government Service is authorised.

Cypher

FROM KENYA (Governor's Deputy)

D. 26th February, 1948.
R. 26th " " 15.40 hrs.

E2333 241/11
-1 MAR 1948

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 137 Top Secret.

Addressed to S. of S.
Repeated to High Commissioner Palestine No. 70.

Your top secret telegram No. 136.

Although the difficulties of the Commander-in-Chief Middle East Land Forces are fully appreciated and we would like to be more helpful, I do not see how we can agree to detainees remaining in Kenya after 15th May. If such a course were to be adopted, I am advised that incidents resulting in bloodshed are bound to occur.

2. Would it not be possible to arrange for a slow ship to take them from here round the Cape? If they left Mombasa on or about 7th May, surely it would be possible to arrange for ship not to reach Palestine until the end of June. Rice and officers mentioned in paragraph 1 of my top secret polarity savingram No. 52 would be prepared to conduct the detainees under such an arrangement.

3. With reference to the suggestion contained in paragraph 2 of your top secret telegram No. 119 dated 12th February, I think Rice might be prepared to assist in the manner suggested, but he very much doubts if anyone of his staff would be prepared to do so.

Distributed to:-

R. 248		Mr. Duke
Secretary of State		Mr. Mathieson
Sir T. Lloyd		Mr. Higham
Mr. Rees-Williams		Mr. Gardiner-Hill
Sir S. Caine		Mr. Holmes
Sir C. Jeffries		Mr. Dale
Mr. Holding		Mr. Cohen
Mr. Martin		Mr. J.H. Wallace
Mr. Trafford Smith		Mr. I.S. Robertson
War Office (M.O.4.)	"	Lt.Col. M.M. Chamberlain.
Foreign Office	"	Mr. J.G.S. Keith.
Ministry of Transport	"	Mr. Pocketts.
" " "	"	Mr. Rennie.
Admiralty	"	Mr. G.C.B. Dodds.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Cypher (O.T.P.)

26 FEB 1948

TO KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

Sent 21st February, 1948. 23.15 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

No. 136 Top Secret.

Addressed Governor Kenya.
Repeated High Commissioner, Palestine No. 669.

Your Top Secret telegram No. 94 (not to Palestine) and previous correspondence.

Jewish detainees at Gil Gil.

Disposal of these Jews has been subject of interdepartmental discussion here. War Office supports strongly held view of Commander-in-Chief Middle East Land Forces that it would be most undesirable to return detainees to Palestine much before final military evacuation on 1st August and that to do so would gravely aggravate difficulties of withdrawal. War Office consider that in these circumstances it would be necessary for General Officer Commanding to detain them until withdrawal and that this in itself would provoke attacks on British Forces by terrorist organisations.

2. In these circumstances it would be appreciated if you would agree to hold the detainees after the 15th of May until arrangements can be made for a ship to take them to Palestine, where they would have to arrive not later than mid-July.

3. Legal powers to make provision for reception of detainees in Palestine will of course lapse on termination of Civil Government on the 15th of May and the course described in paragraph 2 above would only be adopted with the acquiescence of United Nations Commission. If the Commission show any disinclination to accept detainees then it would be necessary, despite the military disadvantages, to ensure their arrival in Palestine before the 15th of May.

4. In view of these assurances that detainees will be taken from Kenya in any case in time to arrive in Palestine not later than mid-July and, in the circumstances described in paragraph 3, before 15th of May, it is proposed, provided you see no objection, to inform the United Nations Commission that we do not propose to return detainees to Palestine before the termination of the Mandate and that it may not be possible, for practical reasons, e.g. shipping, to return them until some time after the termination date. Meanwhile there is no objection to your informing the detainees now that they will be back in Palestine before the final evacuation of British Forces.

5./

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

5. If you agree to the above action, your legal advisers will no doubt consider what if any legislation will be required. My advisers doubt whether the provisions of section 2 or section 3 of the Detained Persons Removal Ordinance will strictly cover removal from Kenya after 15th of May but if the detainees are willing to go there will presumably be no legal difficulty. My advisers think that the Control of Detained Persons Ordinance will cover their temporary detention after 15th of May pending arrangements for their release.

6. It is not known whether Military would wish to detain the Jews in enclave if they arrive only 2 - 3 weeks before withdrawal. It is possible that detention would provoke strong reaction from Irgun which would outweigh any advantage. Presumably it would assist you if detainees could be told that they would be liberated on arrival. Grateful if High Commissioner to whom this telegram is being repeated would discuss with General Officer Commanding and report latter's views.

Distributed to:-

R.243
Secretary of State
Sir T. Lloyd
Mr. Rees-Williams
Sir S. Caine
Sir C. Jeffries
Mr. Holding
Mr. Martin
Mr. Trafford Smith
Mr. Gutch
Mr. Mathieson
War Office (M.O.4.) - Lt.Col. Charteris.
Foreign Office - Mr. Beith.
Ministry of Transport - Mr. Pockett.
Cabinet Offices - Colonel Sherman.

Mr. Higham
Mr. Galsworthy
Mr. Holmer
Mr. Dale
Mr. Cohen
Mr. J.M. Wallace
Mr. I.D. Robertson

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

PALESTINE

E 2936

3 MAR 1948

Disposal of Arab detainees

The existence of these detainees has been brought to the notice of the U.N. Commission but no decisions have been taken on the matter as they stay should be repatriated to Palestine. It was stated in reply to a question by the Commission that although no decision had been taken in the matter it was presumed that these detainees would ultimately be repatriated to Palestine.

There is no truth whatever in the R.R.S. message. The Commission have not made any statement or reached any decision in this matter.

FROM: U.K. Del New York.

No.

Dated

Received in Registry: 738 2 Mar 3

Last Paper. 2333

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8 Mathesan 8/
Herman Bot/off
Scherr. M.I.5
M13a
M.O.4
Adm
AM Mar 8

(Minutes.)

Instructions have now been sent to N. York about these people

HB Mar. 8

(Action completed.) GEM 9/3

(Index.) 14/2/49

Next Paper. 3050

30471 F.O.P

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E

16

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]

CYPHER/OTP

FILES

FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE

(From United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

No. 738.
2nd March, 1948.

D: 3.19 p.m. 2nd March, 1948.
R: 9.00 p.m. 2nd March, 1948.

Repeated to: Governor of Kenya,
High Commissioner Jerusalem,
Washington Saving.

E 2936
3 MAR 1948

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET

Addressed Foreign Office telegram No. 738 of 2nd March repeated for information to Governor of Kenya, High Commissioner Jerusalem and Saving to Washington.

Your telegram BRIEF NT 75 - detainees in Gil Gil camp.

The existence of these detainees has been brought to the notice of the United Nations Palestine Commission but no (repeat no) discussions have been entered into as to when or how they should be repatriated to Palestine. In reply to a question by the Commission however it was stated that although no decisions had been taken in this matter it was presumed that these detainees would ultimately be repatriated to Palestine.

2. Bunche has informed Fletcher-Cooke that the letter to the Jewish community council of Haifa has not (repeat not) yet been despatched but will merely take the line that the Commission have the existence of these detainees in mind and that no (repeat no) discussions as to when or how they will be repatriated from Kenya to Palestine have as yet been entered into with this delegation.

3. There is therefore no truth in the B.B.C. message as the Commission have not (repeat not) issued any statement or reached any decision in this matter.

Foreign Office please pass to Colonial Office and Immediate to Kenya and Jerusalem as my telegrams Nos. 1 and 158 respectively.

[Copies sent to Colonial Office and to Telegraph Section Colonial Office for repetition to Kenya and Jerusalem].

@@@

3 MAR 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Group.....FO.....

Class.....371.....

Piece.....68640.....

Following document(s) retained in the Department of origin under Section 3 (4) of the Public Records Act, 1958

E 3122/34/31

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:-

FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948

E

PALESTINE

E 3622

18 MAR 1948

Number E3122/341/31

TELEGRAM FROM
United Kingdom
Delegation
NEW YORK
No. 903

[redacted]

Received in Registry 17th Mar
18th "

JEWISH Detainees in Kenya

Refers Foreign Office telegram No 1026, (E3122/341/31). Commission state that they have no objection to assumption made in letter from United Kingdom delegation re acceptance in Palestine of Kenya detainees after the termination of the mandate. Commission have received two telegrams from Jewish detainees at Gilgil. Texts in immediately following telegram. Commission have noted contents of same and have enquired whether there is any information available to clarify their contents and particularly the references to the "reported statement" of the Commission, and Attorney-General of Kenya.

Last Paper.

3324

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

S. Wallerson. CO/
Sherman, Sol Off
Scherr. M.I.5.
M.I.3.a.
MO4
Admty
O.M.
Mar. 18

(Action completed.)

(Index)

Next Paper.

3623

(Minutes.)

I have held these pp. up for a day or two in the hope that the CO would receive a tel from Kenya which would enable us to reply. They have not yet had anything from Kenya, however, and meanwhile the position of the UN Commn. has become more dubious.

We must await the comments of Kenya.

M.S. Beith
Mar. 23

Bu. Apr. 1
B. Apr. 13

HB. 23/3

30471 F.O.P

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
References:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E 3622
18 MAR 1948

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on.]

Cypher/OTP WORLD ORGANISATION DISTRIBUTION

FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE

(From United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

No. 905. D: 1.20.p.m. March 17th. 1948.
March 17th, 1948. R: 8.00.p.m. March 17th, 1948.

IMMEDIATE.
SECRET.
GIANT.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram 905 March 17th; repeated to Governor of Kenya, High Commissioner Jerusalem, B.M.E.O., Cairo, for Commander-in-Chief Middle East Land Forces and Saving to Washington.

Your telegram No. 1026 - Jewish detainees in Kenya.

Final sentence of letter sent to Commission on this matter read "It is presumed that the Commission will not (repeat not) raise any objection to the acceptance of any or all (repeat any or all) of these persons in Palestine after the date of the termination of the mandate".

2. In their reply, the Commission state that they have "no (repeat no) objection in principle to the assumption made".

3. Commission has received two telegrams from Jewish detainees at Gilgil. Texts in my immediately following telegram. Commission has noted contents of telegrams and has enquired whether there is any information available to clarify their contents and particularly the references to the "reported statement" of the Commission and the statements of the Attorney-General of Kenya.

4. Alleged statement by the Commission is no doubt a reference to the B.B.C. message referred to in paragraph 1 of your telegram Brief No. 75. In my telegram 738 I explained that Commission had made no (repeat no) such statement and I propose to reply to the Commission, if you see no objection, that the statement referred to was contained in a B.B.C. broadcast which had no foundation in fact.

5. Governor of Kenya will no doubt furnish me with material to reply to Commission's enquiry about statements of the Attorney-General of Kenya.

Please pass to Colonial Office and repeat Kenya, Jerusalem and B.M.E.O. Cairo as my telegrams Nos. 2, 222 and 10 all immediate.

[Copy sent to Telegraph Section Colonial Office for repetition to Kenya and Jerusalem. Repeated to B.M.E.O. Cairo].

---oOo---

18 MAR 1948
EXPRESS

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Notes

Foreign Office
United Kingdom
Delegation
No. [illegible] 904
Received in Registry 17th Mar 18th "

[illegible] (No. [illegible]) by
Communication from [illegible] on behalf of Foreign Offices
in Kenya.

Last Paper.

3622

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8, Whitehead. CO
Herman/Cab Off
Colers. M.I.5.
M.I.7c
M.O.4
Admty
P.M.
Mar 18
(on E3622)

(Action completed.)

[illegible] 14/4

(Index.)

[illegible] 4/5/49

Next Paper.

5202

(Minutes.)

See E 3622 a minute

JB Mar. 23

9. P.P. CO to Kenya 436 17/6
– Kenya to CO. 427 18/6
LT 23/vi

10. P.P. CO to Mr Lt Col 82448 50/c 17/6
– Mr. C to Mr Lt 150/p M + 22/6
LT. 24/vi.

30471 F.O.P

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E 3623 | 20

En Clair WORLD ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE 18 MAR 1948

(From United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

No. 904 D. 12. 55 p.m. 17th March, 1948.
17th March, 1948. R. 7. 51 p.m. 17th March, 1948.

Repeated to Governor of Kenya
High Commissioner Jerusalem
British Middle East Office Cairo
Washington Saving

IMMEDIATE
GIANT

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 904 of 17th March repeated for information to Governor of Kenya, High Commissioner Jerusalem, B.M.E.O. Cairo for Commander-in-Chief M.E.L.F. and Saving to Washington

My immediately preceding telegram; Jewish detainees in Kenya.

Following are texts of telegrams received by Commission from or on behalf of Jewish detainees at Gilgil.

2. [Begins]

"Denying your reported statement concerning Kenya detainees, Kenya Government officially announced in name of London Government that only if you object camps repatriatriation after May 15th they will repatriate all detainees before it. Otherwise repatriation postponed. Please intervene strongly for immediate repatriation. Rabbi Kahane Chaplain, Jewish exiled detainees Gilgil Kenya" [Ends]

3. [Begins]

"Attorney General, Kenya officially told us yesterday

(a) Denial your repatriation announcement

(b) Camps repatriation only just before evacuation British Forces and not before Mandate termination but if you object our arrival after Mandate termination, Britain will repatriate us before May 15th

(c) Small ordinary groups including sick returning soon. Bitterly shocked camp urges your strong intervention. Camp put all its hope in you for immediate repatriation, please cable. Jewish exiled detainees Gilgil, Kenya " [Ends]

Please pass to Colonial Office and repeat to Kenya, Jerusalem, and B.M.E.O. Cairo as my telegrams Nos. 3 223 and 11 all immediate.

[Copies sent to Colonial Office for repetition to Kenya and Jerusalem]

222

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

75156/151F/48

3623 741 31

Cypher (O.T.P.)

TO KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

Sent 17th June, 1948. 10.00 hrs. UNDERAD

IMPORTANT
No.436 Secret.

Gilgil Jews.

In reply to Press enquiries here I propose to say that detainees have been informed by Governments of Kenya on instructions from H.M.G., that their repatriation to Palestine has been delayed by the terms of the Cease-Fire Agreement and that the problem is being referred to the United Nations Mediator. Have you any observations?

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith.
" " - Mr. B.A.B. Burrows.
" " (News Dept.)-Mr. Matthews.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Enforcement:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

PW 22 E

Cypher (O.T.P.)

3623 241 11

FROM KENYA (Governor's Deputy)

D. 18th June, 1948.
R. 18th " " 15.45 hrs.

IMPORTANT

No. 427 Secret

Your secret telegram No. 436 dated 17th June.

Gilgil Jews.

I have no observations except to say that I greatly trust negotiations will be pressed to a very early and satisfactory conclusion.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith
" " - Mr. B.A.B. Burrows
" " (News Dept.) - Mr. Matthews

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

23

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Cypher (O.T.P.)

FROM KENYA (Governor's Deputy)

D. 18th June, 1948.
R. 18th " " 15.45 hrs.

IMPORTANT

No. 427 Secret

Your secret telegram No. 436 dated 17th June.

Gilgil Jews.

I have no observations except to say that I greatly trust negotiations will be pressed to a very early and satisfactory conclusion.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith
" " - Mr. B.A.B. Burrows
" " (News Dept.) - Mr. Matthews

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[redacted]

Reed. 17 Jun 48.

D.T.O. 161930B Jun. INDEXED

From:- C in C MELF

To:- War Office
Info:- HQ East Africa Command

3623 741 71

IMPORTANT

SECRET. 82148 SD1c.

Our 81109 G(O)B of 9 Jun 48 not Force Nairobi. Subject move of Coy 2 R Berks to Gilgil.

One. Request confirm that general purpose of move can now be downgraded to unclas.

Two. If mediator allows detainees to return to Palestine suggest future moves should be graded not higher than restd.

Three. For Force Nairobi. Your 08999 G(Ops) of 15 Jun. Move itself now downgraded to unclas.

Message Control.

Distribution by MO4

S of S
US of S
CIGS
VCIGS
DMO
DDMO(A)(B)
MO1,4(8)
DMI
DDMI(I)
MI1,2(c)
VQMG
DD Mov
Col Mov(P)
Q(M)2,8
PUS
DF(a)
DF(c)
F1 (2)
DPR
PR Co-ord
Ministry of Defence (Lt. Col. Waterfield)
Colonial Office (Mr. Higham)
Foreign Office (Mr. Beith)
Ministry of Transport (Mr. Rennie)
Air Ministry ASTO 3 (W.Cmd. K.F. Mackie)

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

CIPHER TELEGRAM

This message will not be distributed outside British Government Departments or Headquarters or re-transmitted, even in cipher, without being paraphrased. (Messages marked O.T.P. need not be paraphrased).

BM/2125(MO4)

From :- War Office 2623 24/ 1

DTO 221750 A/Jun

To :- C-in-C MELF

Info :- HQ East Africa Command

Dosp 22 Jun 48

SECRET 15070 (MO4) INDEXED

Your 82148 SD1c of 16 Jun .

One . Your para first . Agreed .

Two . Your para second . This must depend on circumstances . We will let you know at the time .

Message Control.

IMPORTANT

Copies to:-

S of S	PUS
US of S	DF(a)
CIGS	DF(c)
VCIGS	F 1(2)
DMO	DPR
DDMO(A)(B)	PR Co-ord.
MO 1, 4(8)	Ministry of Defence (Lt.Col.Waterfield)
DMI	Colonial Office (Mr Higham)
DDMI(I)	Foreign Office (Mr Beith)
MI 1, 2c.	Ministry of Transport (Mr Rennie)
VQMG	Air Ministry ASTO 3 (W/Comdr.K.F.Mackie)
DD Mov	
Col Mov(P)	
Q(M)2, 8.	

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948

Palestine

EASTERN

E5202/G

26 APR 1948

E 5202 31/G

Mr. Higham Colonial Office, to Mr. Burrows. Y5156/151F/48 March 22nd.

Position of Detainees in Gilgil Camp, Kenya

Last Paper

References

E3623/341/31

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Minutes)

This paper has just reached me and Mr. Higham's letter is now somewhat out of date. The position is as follows:

We have placed on record with the United Nations Commission the fact that we intend to return these Kenya detainees to Palestine before we withdraw our troops. The Commission stated (E3622) that they would raise no objection to this.

The Colonial Office were apparently having cold feet at the end of March about the possibility of a truce interfering with the return of the detainees. This problem is parallel to the effect of a truce on the clearance of the illegal immigrants from Cyprus, which is a much larger problem. Sir A. Cadogan is aware of the position and Mr. Higham now agrees that no further instructions are required. I think we must simply go ahead with our arrangements for the return of detainees.

(J.G.S. Beith)

29th April, 1948.

Now see E5750 a action
JB May 7

(Action completed)

(Index)

Next Paper

33744

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1.

My Reference 75156/151F/48.

Your Reference .....

22nd March, 1948.

Dear Burrows,

You will recall that on the telephone the other day, I recorded our concern lest the adoption of a Palestine truce should hinder the return to Palestine of the 230 detainees in Gilgil Camp, Kenya. While it appears improbable that any effective truce will be arranged we should like to have your considered view about the position of these people. We have already accepted, on the official level, that developments at New York may interfere with the plan to clear the Cyprus camps before the completion of our military withdrawal from Palestine; it seems to us, however, that a clear distinction could be drawn between illegal immigrants who have never legitimately been inside Palestine and the detainees, who are legally domiciled in Palestine and have merely been removed from that country to Kenya because security conditions made it impossible to ensure their safe custody at home. Some of these detainees are Palestinian citizens, the remainder are of central European nationality or stateless. The legal position is that these men were detained under Palestine law, deported under Palestine law and are now held in detention under a Kenya Ordinance.

Tentative arrangements are being made to send a ship down to collect the Jews and in time for them to be back in Palestine by June 1[illegible]th, but the date of their arrival in Palestine is by no means certain and

will

B.A.B. BURROWS, ESQ.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

24 APR 1948

will probably be fixed so as to be about a fortnight before the military withdrawal.

We have, of course, said nothing yet to Governor, Kenya, about the possible effect of a truce, although he is aware that any successor authority other than the United Nations Commission may be less willing to receive these terrorists back. We should like, however, to be able to reassure him as soon as possible that nothing will be allowed to interfere with their return.

The possibility also exists, of course, that the terms of a trusteeship agreement might make it difficult for us to send these people back and we hope you will find it possible to instruct Cadogan to make sure that nothing is written into any trusteeship agreement that might prejudice our position.

I need scarcely emphasize the importance of removing these dangerous terrorists from Kenya at the earliest possible moment. Their continued presence is a cause of grave concern to the Governor and the position has not been made any easier by the recent escape of six men. Public opinion in the colony is likely to press in no uncertain manner for action to remove these men. I am sending a copy of this letter to Charteris, War Office.

Yours sincerely,

John D Higham

(J.D. Higham)

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

EASTERN | DEPT.

11949

E 3750 | 341 | 31/G

Sir R. Campbell, Cairo 224 April 30th.

Jewish Detainees at Kenya.

Last Paper

E 5202

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Action completed) 13/7

(Index)

Next Paper

(Minutes)

I have no doubt that the Egyptian Department would strongly support the view of the Ambassador in this matter. As the question is one of some urgency, in view of the fact that we terminate the mandate next week, and the detainees will have to be in Palestine by about the end of June, I attach a separate minute for submission, if necessary, to the Secretary of State, with a draft letter to the other Ministers concerned.

Egyptian Dept. first

7th May, 1948.

(BEITH)

I think it would be most important to send the men through the Canal. They might get through without trouble, but if they did not, there might really be a first class storm.

7/5.

7.5

JB June 16

33744

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 224
(344/1/48)

TOP SECRET 29

His Majesty's Ambassador presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit herewith copies of the undermentioned paper.

BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

30th April, 1948

Reply

Reference to previous communication:

E 5750

Description of Enclosure.

Name, Date, etc.	Subject.
To: Col. Ll.G.O.Jenkins Ref: 344/1/48 Date: 30th April,48	Jewish detainees in Kenya.

(21106) Wt.8573/807 5,000 4/48 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

/E.

BRITISH EMBASSY,

CAIRO.

30th April, 1948.

344/1/48

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET

Dear Jenkins

Thank you for your letter MIL/1/4/ME of April 22nd about the return to Palestine of the Jewish detainees in Kenya.

2. The Ambassador is not at all happy at the prospect of these men being sent through the Suez Canal. They cannot pass through the Canal in a military transport or other passenger ship without the Egyptian authorities becoming aware of their presence on board and of their destination, since under the International Sanitary Convention of 1926 this information will have to be communicated to the port officials on the ship's arrival at Suez; and in any case it is likely to have leaked out earlier. Assuming, as we must, that the Jews and Arabs will be in a state of open war by June with feelings on both sides even more inflamed than at present, there is a grave risk that an attempt may be made to remove the detainees by force with at least the tacit connivance of the Egyptian authorities, or that shots will be fired at the ship on her way through the Canal. Any such incident might provoke an acute crisis in Anglo-Egyptian relations, especially as the knowledge that we are returning these terrorists to Palestine is bound to have provoked great indignation throughout the Arab world.

3. The Legal Counsellor points out that it would theoretically be possible to conceal the presence of the detainees from the Egyptian authorities if they were sent in a British warship, advantage thus being taken of Article 88 of the International Sanitary Convention, as amended in 1938, which exempts warships from medical inspection on a certificate from the ship that there has been no case of plague or cholera on board and that within 12 hours of arrival at an Egyptian port every person on board, without exception, has been carefully examined and no case of either of these diseases detected (only fighting ships count as warships for this purpose and transports and hospital ships are subject to the same controls as ordinary passenger ships). There is also the point that, whatever happened in transit, the Egyptians could not exercise jurisdiction on board a British warship. On the other hand, to send the men in a warship would strengthen the impression, which the repatriation of the terrorists at this juncture is bound to create anyway, that we were intervening in the struggle in favour of the Jews, while any incident involving a British warship would be even more serious than one in which only a transport was concerned

Colonel Ll. G.O. Jenkins, C.B.E.,
Military Division,
British Middle East Office,
General Headquarters,
Middle East Land Force.

4/...

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYED BY THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITH-OUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON
PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE

31

4. In the circumstances, the Ambassador urges strongly that the question of transporting these men via the Suez Canal should be reconsidered and that, if they must be returned to Palestine in June, they should either be sent by air (if this can be done without landing in any Arab state) or else by the long sea route round the Cape. He cannot help feeling, however, that their arrival in Palestine by any route in present conditions is bound to aggravate the situation there and to be interpreted by all Arab states as an unfriendly act, especially if they would be landed at Haifa. He therefore wonders whether means cannot be found to postpone their repatriation until conditions in Palestine become less disturbed. If His Majesty's Government have no authority after May 15th. to hold these men, the successor authority, i.e. United Nations Organisation presumably has. Would it not be possible for His Majesty's Government to ask United Nations Organisation what that body wishes done about these men?

5. I am sending a copy of this letter and yours to the Foreign Office for His Excellency considers that they should be consulted before any decision is taken. The Commanders-in-Chief may also wish to consult the Chiefs-of-Staff on the subject.

Yours ever,

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

32

COPY/LMB.

TOP SECRET

Military Division,
British Middle East Office,
c/o General Headquarters,
MIDDLE EAST LAND FORCES.

MIL/1/4/ME.

22nd April, 1948.

Dear Speaight,

As you are doubtless aware there are certain Jewish detainees held by the KENYA Government on behalf of HMG. At the end of the British mandate there will no longer be any authority to hold them in KENYA, and they will have to be transported back to PALESTINE.

The only practical method of returning them home is by sea through the SUEZ CANAL, and General Headquarters, MIDDLE EAST Land Forces are making the following arrangements. The detainees will leave MOMBASA in a special ship, the OCEAN VIGOUR, approximately 1st June 1948. A ships guard will be provided and the strictest precautions taken to ensure that there are no escapes.

Whilst it seems quite clear that the Egyptian Government have no right under the SUEZ CANAL Convention to object to the transit of these undesirables through the Canal, we think that in the present political atmosphere it is as well that His Excellency should be aware of the Army proposals.

Would you let me know whether he has any comments to make.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) Ll. Jenkins.

R.L. Speaight Esq.,
H.M. Embassy,
CAIRO.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

See Gen. 234 / 1 Cab

Draft. J.G.S.B.

Lord Listowel,
Colonial Office.

(From the Secretary of State)

Egypt Dept.
V.G. 17/5.

Copy to:

Minister of Defence.

Air Minister.

(Copy also to Mr Lucas, Cabinet Office)

Mr. Beith
May 7
(BEITH)

7.5

The Official Committee on Palestine has recently been planning the return of approximately two hundred and fifty Jewish detainees from Gilgil Camp in Kenya to Palestine. The men were to be returned about a fortnight before the final withdrawal of our troops.

Meanwhile we have just received a copy (enclosed) of a letter from the Embassy at Cairo to the B.M.E.O. expressing grave doubts about the desirability of returning these men by ship via the Canal Zone. I am much impressed by the serious dangers to which the Embassy draw attention of a crisis in Anglo-Egyptian relations arising from the return of these dangerous Jews to Palestine through Egyptian territory. I should accordingly like every effort to be made for these detainees to be returned to Palestine either by air or by the long sea route. I imagine that it will hardly be practicable to send them back by the Cape in time, whereas I understand that some of the men have recently in fact been returned to Palestine by air. I should be very grateful if the competent Service authorities could plan the necessary air transport, as I consider that the political arguments brought forward by the Embassy at Cairo make

it/

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(28654) Wt.14696/147 75,000 6/47 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

it desirable to use every effort to avoid shipment via the Canal Zone.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

PALESTINE

Registry Number: E7062/201/31

FROM: G. Higham (Colonial Office) to L. Butler

No. 75156/1511/48

Dated

Received in Registry: 26 May. 28 May

Jewish detainees in Kenya

Enclosure copies of Kenya tel 342 of May 18 & Colonial Office reply to 377 May 26 regarding visit of Mr. FRIEDMAN ZOHAR of Prisoners Welfare Society to Jewish detainees in Kenya.

Requests that Cairo may be informed that the International Red Cross have been asked to send a representative to the Gilgil camps.

Last Paper: E5750

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

Tel Cairo 808 May 26
Repeat Haifa to 32.
Tel Haifa to 33 May 26
Repeat Cairo 809
G. to Higham (CO) May 28.

(Action completed): 1/6

(Index): 4/49

Next Paper: E8048

(Minutes.)

Library

JB May 29

(Mr. Higham consulted me about payment of cost of passages etc. of the I.R.C. delegate. After speaking to Mr. Marshall, I told Mr. Higham that the normal procedure in such cases seemed to be that whoever had the costs of transporting the refugees would pay. Most of the I.R.C. representatives; the I.R.C. would no doubt pay his salary and probably provide free of charge any necessary drugs etc.

1/6

JB June 2

See within:-
Tel from Kenya (Sir P. Mitchell) to Colonial Office. No 372 — 1/6/48.

JB June 7

34967

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Colonial Office,
The Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

My Reference 75156/151F/48

Your Reference

26 May, 1948.

E. 7068

28 MAY 1948

Dear Beith,

I enclose a copy of Kenya telegram No. 342 about the Gilgil detainees. We have asked the Jewish Agency, to confirm that the organization named is reputable, to inform Mr. Eben Zohar that the Governor would welcome the earliest possible visit of two of the Society's representatives. I should be grateful if you would instruct Marriott to grant visas should application be made, and to give any other facilities he may be able to render.

As the Governor attaches considerable importance to having some outside representative in the camps as soon as possible, we have invited the International Red Cross to send their Cairo delegate to Gilgil both to visit the camps and to accompany the detainees on the return journey.

Would you kindly inform the embassy at Cairo that we have made this request to the International Red Cross and ask them to give any assistance they can to M. A. de Cocatrix. In particular we have agreed to provide free air passage for him from Egypt to Nairobi. The cost of passage should be debited to the government of Palestine and the claim forwarded to the Crown Agents for the Colonies in due course.

Yours sincerely,

(J.D. Higham)

J.G.S. BEITH, ESQ.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

36

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Cypher (O.T.P.)

FROM KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

D. 18th May, 1948.
R. 18th " " 11.55 hrs.

IMMEDIATE
No.342 Secret.

Addressed to S. of S.
Repeated to Middle East through East African Command.

Following telegram has been received. Begins.

Knowing Your Excellency's sympathetic attitude towards the problem, we appeal to you to cable your consent for our representative go to Kenya and accompany Jewish detainees home. Our approaches to local authorities lately unanswered. With the termination of the British Mandate and liquidation of the administration it is only to you we can now apply. Shall be grateful for your consent in view of the urgency of the matter. Ebenzohar Chairman of Prisons Welfare Society, Tel Aviv. Ends.

2. If person and organisation named are reputable, strongly urge immediate despatch of 2 representatives to Gilgil camp if possible under guarantee of International Red Cross. Nothing could help reduce the tension here more than this.

Copies sent to:-
Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith.
War Office(M.O.4.)- Col. M.M.Charteris.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

37

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

75156/1512/48

Cypher (O.T.P.)

TO KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

Sent 25th May, 1948. 14.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE

No. 377 Secret.

Addressed to Gov., Kenya.
Repeated to G.H.Q., Middle East.

Your telegram No. 342.

Gilgil detainees.

Jewish Agency, who confirm organisation reputable, have been asked to pass message to Ebensohar stating that you would welcome earliest visit of two representatives.

2. British Consul-General Haifa has been asked to grant visas and give any assistance possible.

3. International Red Cross unable sponsor visit, but have received request from Camp Supervisor asking that I.R.C. representative accompany detainees during journey. In view of likelihood that Tel Aviv party may not reach Kenya owing to practical difficulties I have informed I.R.C. that earliest visit of their Cairo delegate, M. de Cocatrix, would be welcome.

4. For your information repatriation will now probably take place by civil charter plane Nairobi-El Adem, thence by sea. I.R.C. delegate could no doubt be of substantial assistance during period at El Adem between arrival of first and last aircraft.

(Copies sent to War Office for transmission to G.H.Q., Middle East).

/Copies

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371 / 68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office	-	Mr. J.G.S. Beith.
War Office (M.O.4)	-	Col. M.M. Charteris.
M.I.5	-	Mr. Macdonald.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Registry No. E 7062/30/31

CYPHER

May, 1948.

Despatched 1 35 P.M.

J.G.S.B.

Draft.

H.M. Ambassador, Cairo.

Telegram.

No. 808

Dated. May 26th

Repeat to:

Haifa 32

Cypher

Departmental.

Copy to:

Colonial Office (Mr. Higham)

RECEIVED IN D.S.
28 MAY 1948

IMPORTANT

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Embassy, Cairo, No. 808 of 26th May. Repeated for information to Haifa.

Gilgil detainees.

Colonial Office have invited the International Red Cross to send their Cairo delegate to Gilgil both to visit the camps and to accompany the detainees on the return journey to Palestine. Please give any assistance you can to M. de Cocatrix. You should provide free air passage for him from Egypt to Nairobi and cost should be debited to the Government of Palestine and the claim forwarded to the Crown Agents for the Colonies.

JB May 26

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

39

CYPHER/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

No. 808.

D: 7.35 a.m. 27th May, 1948.

26th May, 1948.

Repeated to: Haifa No. 32.

IMPORTANT

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Embassy Cairo No. 808 of 26th May repeated for information Haifa.

Gilgil detainees.

Colonial Office have invited the International Red Cross to send their Cairo delegate to Gilgil both to visit the camps and to accompany the detainees on the return journey to Palestine. Please give any assistance you can to M. de Coestrix. You should provide free air passage for him from Egypt to Nairobi and cost should be debited to the Government of Palestine and the claim forwarded to the Crown Agents for the Colonies.

GGG

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Registry No. E 7062/341/31

J.G.S.B.

Draft.
Haifa.

Telegram.

No. 33

Dated. May 26th

Repeat to:

Embassy, Cairo. 809

Cypher

Departmental.

Copy to:

Colonial Office
(Mr. Higham)

CYPHER

26 May, 1948

Despatched 9.10 am M.

IMPORTANT

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Haifa No. 33 of 26th May. Repeated for information to Embassy, Cairo.

Mr. Eben Zohar, Chairman of Prisons Welfare Society, Tel Aviv, has asked for permission for representatives to go to Kenya and accompany Jewish detainees there home. Jewish Agency have been informed that the Governor of Kenya would welcome the earliest possible visit of two representatives from the Society. Please grant visas for the journey to Kenya on application and give any other facilities you can.

JB May 26

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

41

CYPHER/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO HAIFA

No. [redacted]

D: 9.10 a.m. 26th May, 1948.

26th May, 1948.

Repeated to: Cairo (Embassy) No. 809.

IMPORTANT

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Haifa No. 33 of 26th May repeated for information to Embassy, Cairo.

Mr. Eben Zohar, Chairman of Prisons Welfare Society, Tel Aviv, has asked for permission for representatives to go to Kenya and accompany Jewish detainees there home. Jewish Agency have been informed that the Governor of Kenya would welcome the earliest possible visit of two representatives from the Society. Please grant visas for the journey to Kenya on application and give any other facilities you can.

END

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

42
pm.

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Cypher (O.T.P.)

FROM KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell) UNDATED

D. 1st June, 1948.
R. 1st " " 11.00 hrs.

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 372 Secret

7062 / 341 / 31

Your telegram No. 377.

Gil Gil Detainees.

If you are finding any difficulty in obtaining civil charter planes I think we could arrange here to charter sufficient planes to move the detainees to El Adem.

2. If we are to keep our word and move the detainees from here by 15th June very early action will have to be taken. My telegram No. 344 dated 18th May refers.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office	-	Mr. J.G.S. Beith
War Office (M.O.4.)	-	Col. M.M. Charteris
M.I.5.	-	Mr. Macdonald

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948 | EASTERN | 15 JUN 1948

E 3048/341/31/G

F.O. Minute (Mr. Beith.)
7 - 5 - 48
14 - 6 - 48.

The return to Palestine of the Jewish detainees from Gilgil Camp, Kenya.

Last Paper

E 5750

References

(Minutes)

See Also:

1) Tel from G.H.Q., MELF to Min./Defence No. 234/CCL of 9 May.

JB June 16

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Action completed)

13/7

(Index)

Next Paper

34092

FO OFFICE
References:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E8048/G
D/

40

The return to Palestine of the Jewish detainees from Gilgil Camp, Kenya.

The Official Committee on Palestine has for some time had under consideration the timing which should be adopted for the return of these detainees to Palestine. They have caused a great deal of trouble to the Governor of Kenya (six of them escaped recently) and the Colonial Office have given the Governor explicit assurances that they will be moved as soon as possible after the termination of the mandate. The case is not unlike that of the internees in Cyprus, except that this body of two hundred and fifty is a more compact and dangerous one.

The arrangement finally reached between the War Office and Colonial Office at meetings of the Official Committee was that the detainees should be returned to Palestine about a fortnight before the date of final withdrawal. The matter was taken up by the U.K. Delegation at New York with the United Nations Commission for Palestine, in the following words:- "It is presumed that the "Commission will not raise any objection to the "acceptance of any or all of these persons in "Palestine after the date of the termination of the "mandate". The Commission replied that they had "no objection in principle to the assumption made".

We have now seen the letter from the Embassy at Cairo to the B.M.E.O. in E 5750/341/G. There can of course be no question of postponing or cancelling the return of the detainees to Palestine, as tentatively suggested in paragraph 4 of the Cairo letter. Nevertheless, I think that full weight should be given to the arguments against returning these men by ship through the Canal Zone. It would be unwise and unnecessary to risk a serious incident with the Egyptian Government on this matter of detail, when it could be avoided by (a) flying the detainees into Palestine, or (b) sending them round the Cape.

Of these two courses, (a) seems preferable, as it would be difficult to organise shipping at this stage in such a way as to be certain of having the men back in Palestine before our troops withdraw. Nevertheless, (a) has its difficulties. The aircraft (presumably Dakotas) would have to refuel in the Sudan and there is no really suitable airfield in the Haifa enclave. I have therefore drafted the attached letter from the Secretary of State to the other Ministers concerned, as an expression of a strong wish, subject to practical possibilities.

N. S. Beith (BEITH)

7th May, 1948.

7.5

/I agree

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

15 JUN 1948

I agree that these men should not be returned to Palestine through the Canal.

But there seems to me also to be strong objections to the idea of our flying these 250 gangsters into Palestine by British military aircraft in the near future.

I suggest therefore that we should adopt the third course, namely of sending them round the Cape by sea. There is apparently a risk that in that event they may not reach Palestine until after the withdrawal of our troops. But the Jews can hardly decline to receive them, and in those circumstances they would presumably be landed at a Jewish port and turned over to whatever authority existed there at the time.

Mr Knight

8th May, 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

Minutes.

45

Mr. Wright

I now attach a copy of telegram No. 234/CCL of May 9th from G.H.Q. M.E.L.F. commenting on the Cairo letter about the return of 260 Jewish detainees from Kenya to Palestine (see my minute of May 7th).

You will see that the Commanders-in-Chief came out in favour of flying these men to Cyprus and sending them on by sea to Palestine to arrive about June 15th. They dismiss the course which you advocated in your minute of May 8th, namely that the men should be sent round the Cape by sea, on the ground that this "would be too uneconomical to be practicable, and can not in any case be arranged in time". The first reason is illogical but I think that the second is a strong one. Once we have finally removed our troops from Palestine we are at the mercy of the Jewish authorities in this matter. It is true that the latter would almost certainly be bound to admit these people to Palestine but it is difficult to defend taking an unnecessary risk on this.

Mr. Pyman has to attend a meeting at the Ministry of Defence on this subject tomorrow at 11.00 a.m. which has been convoked in the light of the attached telegram from the Commanders-in-Chief. Do you wish him to stand out for the long sea route on which he is likely to be opposed by both the Colonial Office and the War Office? I personally suggest that we might agree to the modified plan of sea transport suggested in paragraph 11(a) of the attached telegram.

(J.G.S. Beith)

10th May, 1948.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

/C66

Mr Wright and I saw Sir O. Sargent last night about the Kenya detainees. The upshot was that:—

(i) We should not agree either to shipment through the Canal Zone or direct flight to Palestine

(ii) Before deciding between the C's in C's suggestion and the long sea route Sir O. Sargent wanted to know more exactly on what legal grounds these

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371 / 68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

these men had been held!!
I am Consulting Co.
(Confirm Mr Martin's M.S. Bennett statement below) May 11

I attended the meeting of the Vice Chiefs of Staff ~~this morning~~ on the 11th May.

The Vice Chiefs were unanimously opposed to shipping these men through the canal zone.

They were inclined for a time to favour flying the men direct to Palestine but I was able to dissuade them from this and they eventually abandoned the idea.

They ruled out the long sea route on the ground that it was impracticable owing to shortness of time.

They therefore concluded that the only possible course was to fly the men part of the way and take them by sea for the rest(paragraph 11(a) of G.H.Q. Middle East's telegram No. 234 CCL). The Colonial Office representative raised strong objection to the use of Cyprus as a staging post and it was agreed that the men should be flown to Cyrenaica and sent on by sea. I stressed the importance of the aircraft carrying these Jews not landing at any airfield in Egypt if it could possibly be avoided. It was agreed that this point should be covered in the instructions to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East.

The Chiefs-of-Staff Secretariat will send us a copy of their draft telegram to the Middle East. Sir Orme Sargent may wish to see this.

As regards the point which ~~I~~ Sir O. Sargent raised with

/Mr.

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

Mr. Wright and Mr. Beith the Colonial Office representative said, at the Vice Chiefs-of-Staff meeting, that the men were held under a wartime Palestine ordinance. They had not been tried in a public court since disclosure of evidence against them would have meant in many cases, certain death for the informers who had provided the evidence. The evidence in each case had, however, been very carefully sifted and all cases had been under periodic review by a Judge.

I have since obtained the following information from the Colonial Office:-

(1) The men were detained in Palestine under Palestine ordinance and in Kenya under a Kenya ordinance.

(2) Under the Palestine ordinance their detention is during the pleasure of the High Commissioner for Palestine. This authority presumably lapses at the end of the mandate. The Colonial Office consider themselves debarred from asking the Governor of Kenya to keep the men in Kenya for any appreciable time after the end of the mandate as they have promised the Governor that he would not be saddled with them.

(3) The reason the men were arrested and detained [redacted] is that they are regarded as having been concerned in terrorist activities.

(4) The reason for sending them out of Palestine for detention at all was that the authorities feared that if they kept them in prison in Palestine they might be rescued by their friends.

Discussed with Mr. Wright. These papers need not be submitted to Sir O. Sargent until My Defence staff come over.
L.F.L. Pyman

(L.F.L. Pyman)

12th May, 1948.

Minister of Defence is now seeking.

/a

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

a minute to the Secretary of State and the Colonial Secretary. We had better print it.

LS/
12/5

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

IZ 1224
TOO 091105B
(090905Z)
TOR 091820Z

E8048 G

IMPORTANT

From : G.H.Q. M.E.L.F.

To : Ministry of Defence, London

Info : C -in- C Mediterranean
C -in- C East Indies

234/OCL

9th May, 1948.

From Commanders in Chief for Chiefs of Staff.

Subject return of approximately 260 Jewish detainees from Kenya to Palestine.

Embassy Cairo Letter copy to Foreign Office, 344/1/48 dated 30th April 1948 refers.

1. G.O.C. Palestine considers these thugs should not be let loose in Palestine earlier than two weeks at most before date of our final withdrawal. If they arrived earlier special arrangements would have to be made for their custody in Haifa enclave which would be heavy additional drain on already limited resources. On present plans of arrival of detainees in Palestine should be about 15th June.

2. We have considered move by sea but H.M. Ambassador in Egypt considers detainees should not be transported by ship through Suez Canal in Red Ensign ship as Egyptian authorities would inevitably become aware of their presence on board and destination due to International Sanitary Convention 1926. Ambassador considers grave risk of Egyptian attempts to remove detainees by force or that shots might be fired at ship. Any such incident would obviously be most objectionable.

3. Concealed movement through Canal by warship though theoretically possible is unsound and impracticable as apart from naval difficulties, the subsequent inevitable publicity would strengthen impression that we were intervening in favour of Jews.

4. Alternative sea route round Cape considered too uneconomical to be practicable, and cannot in any case be arranged in time.

Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

5. Only means of movement therefore appears to be by air avoiding landing in Egyptian territory. This necessitates 4 engined aircraft which will not be able to land in Palestine after Ramat David evacuated which will certainly be well before 15th June.

6. We consider that detainees should be flown from Kenya to either Cyprus or Cyrenaica about 12th June. They would then be transferred direct to special ship which would proceed to Palestine arriving about 15th June.

7. Understand existing legislation in Cyprus covers Ijis only and special legislation would be required for detainees which would probably take considerable time to enact. In Cyrenaica on the other hand no legislation beyond authority of Commander -in- Chief MELF would be required which could be given without delay.

8. Cyprus is handier for final sea move to Palestine and moreover would obviate the local Arab reaction which might occur in Cyrenaica. We consider however that it should be possible to transfer detainees from aircraft at El Adem to ship in Tobruk Harbour quickly and without undue publicity.

9. Cyprus is in our opinion the better choice.

10. Including allowance of four guards per aircraft, at least twelve Yorks would be required which it would be necessary to provide from Transport Command. We would require these aircraft to stage in Egypt on their outward journey to pick up army guards. We have considered use of Lancasters but they have insufficient capacity and will still have an operational commitment until completion of evacuation. If necessary, however, a few Lancasters can be provided to supplement Yorks.

11. We therefore recommend:-

(a) Detainees should be flown from Kenya to Cyprus and taken thence by sea to Palestine to arrive about 15th June.

(b) That the necessary aircraft for this move should be provided by Transport Command.

(c) That the Colonial Office should be requested to arrange the necessary special legislation to cover these detainees in Cyprus. If however notice is too short to obtain this legislation we are confident that the alternative route through Cyrenaica is feasible.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

12. We have not repeat not consulted the Governor of Cyprus on the matter.

CIRCULATION

TOO 091105B

D.C.O.R.
Foreign Office
First Sea Lord
Message Control W/O
Registry Telegrams Air Ministry
Chief of Combined Operations Staff
Secretary of State for the Colonies

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Group... FO

Class... 371

Piece... 68640

Following document(s) retained in the Department of origin under Section 3 (4) of the Public Records Act, 1958

E 8049/341/31G

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:-

FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

EASTERN

E8050 / 15 JUN 1948

E8050/341 / 31/5

F. O. Minute
(Mr. Beith)
8 - 6 - 48
15 - 6 - 48.

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

Last Paper
E 8049

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Minutes)

See Also:

1) Min/Defence Comm'd (Tel To G.H.Q. MELF No. COS (ME) 247 of 5/6.

2) M/Defence Comm'd (Tel from G.H.Q. MELF No. 242/ECL of 10/6.

JB June 16

3) War Office Comm'd (Tel from C-in-C MELF 81109 of 10/6).

LT.12.VII

(Action completed)
14/7

(Index)

Next Paper

34092

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371 / 68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E

enter 52

/G

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

The Colonial Secretary has ~~received most pressing~~ representations from the Government of Kenya insisting that a continued failure to remove these 260 Jewish detainees to Palestine will result in "a tragedy". The Governor thinks that the Jews will precipitate serious loss of life by attacking their guards. A meeting was held to-day with the Colonial Office and the War Office to consider further the possible solutions to this problem.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that, in the light of the pressing and desperate representations from the Governor of Kenya about the danger of leaving the detainees there indefinitely, a start should be made with moving the men to Palestine. They should be sent by air to Cyrenaica as soon as arrangements can be made by the Military Authorities to accommodate them there. The aircraft carrying the detainees would have to stage on the way to Cyrenaica but should not do so at major [redacted] such as Khartoum [redacted]; they should use minor aerodromes to avoid publicity and should not stop the night. The detainees should be sent on to Palestine as soon as the present political difficulties arising out of the cease-fire abate.

(Centres of population)

3. Discussion

It has been pointed out in a previous paper that there are very serious objections to any conceivable course of action in this matter and it must be realized that no solution can be an ideal one. The principal factor at present is that the Governor of Kenya virtually refuses to take further responsibility for guarding the detainees. He has now given them two assurances about their return to Palestine without proper authorisation and he insists that as long as they remain in Kenya there is a real danger of tragic loss of life, which would bring down unfavourable publicity upon us.

4. On the other hand the Foreign Office have made it clear that they could not agree to return the men to Palestine during the four weeks period of a cease fire and that it is therefore not possible to fix a date at present for their return. If the situation in Kenya had not got out of hand the obvious course would be to leave the men there until we could fix a date to return them to Palestine. As things are there is much to be said for starting a move towards Palestine and, after careful consideration, it is recommended that the most practicable route is via Cyrenaica. This would involve the co-operation of the War Office in regard to accommodation and guards in Cyrenaica and the R.A.F. in regard to transport from Kenya to Cyrenaica. The War Office have agreed to consult their authorities in the Middle East urgently and it is proposed to inform the Air Ministry of what is recommended here. Air Ministry representatives have previously stated that they could organize transport for these detainees at short notice.

(If the cease-fire broke down we shd have to reconsider the situation)

5. Briefly the present scheme has the following considerations to recommend it:-

(a) It is the most direct route except possibly for shipment via the Canal which would cause trouble with the Egyptians;

./.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(b) It will take some of the steam off what is undoubtedly an explosive situation in Kenya;

(c) It avoids most of the detention problems which would arise from the use of any other route.

J G S Beith

(J.G.S. Beith)
8th June, 1948.

P.6

9.6.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

it is to be
British
must

MOST IMMEDIATE

QL 1339
TOC 0513102
TOD 051508Z

E G

FROM : MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, LONDON

TO : G.H.Q. M.E.L.F.

INFO : C IN C MEDITERRANEAN
C IN C EAST INDIES

COS (ME) 247 5th June 1948

From Chiefs of Staff for Commanders-in-Chief.

Reference 234/CCL.

1. Situation over transfer of Kenya detainees to Palestine is now radically altered by Security Council resolution calling for cease fire of four weeks in Palestine, and that no Governments or Authorities will introduce fighting personnel into Palestine or Arab States, and that should men of military age be introduced into territories under their control, they will not mobilise or submit them to military training during this period. The Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for the Colonies have decided that H.M.G. are therefore precluded from sending the Kenya detainees to Palestine during the cease fire period, as to do so would jeopardise the whole truce arrangements.

2. The Governor of Kenya has represented in the strongest terms the danger of serious disturbances in the Jewish detention camp at Gilgil if the movement of the 260 men back to Palestine is not begun by 15th June, in accordance with the written undertaking given to them by the Governor of Kenya on 14th May. The Governor of Kenya also advises that these men are in a mood to create such an incident that might lead to wholesale killing, and that if this occurred, the political repercussions of black guards killing Jews would be severe.

3. You should, therefore, consider, in consultation with the Governor of Kenya and the G.O.C., whether the present or potential situation is such that European guards as replacements or reinforcements are urgently required.

4. Please report your views and action taken.

TOO 0513102

CIRCULATION

D.C.O.R.
Foreign Office
First Sea Lord
Message Control W.O.
Registry Telegrams A.M.
Chief of Combined Operations Staff
Secretary of State for the Colonies

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

IMMEDIATE

IZ. 1486
TOO. 101103B
(100903Z)
TOR. 110745Z

E G

12 JUN 1948

From : G.H.Q., M.E.L.F.

To : Ministry of Defence, London.

Rptd : C-in-C., Mediterranean.
C-in-C., East Indies.

242/CCL. 10th June, 1948.

From Commanders-in-Chief for Chiefs of Staff.

Reference COS(ME) 247.

1. We have considered the possibility and desirability of moving the detainees from Gilgil to Cyrenaica as an interim measure, but have turned this down because of the need to establish a new camp in Cyrenaica for use for an indefinite period which will take some three weeks to complete. In addition this course would cause resentment both locally and in other Arab states.

2. Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F. has ordered the move of one British Inf. Coy from Eritrea to Kenya which should arrive at Gilgil about 14th June and has instructed A/GOC East Africa Command to inform Kenya Government that the army are prepared to accept full responsibility for guarding the detainees from the time of the arrival of the Coy if the Kenya Government so desire.

3. Simultaneously Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F. has issued instructions for accommodation to be prepared for the detainees in Cyrenaica. This accommodation cannot be ready until approx. 1st July. From then onwards it will be possible to house the detainees there if future developments so require, until such time as we are permitted to return them to Palestine.

CIRCULATION. TOO. 101103B

D.C.O.R.
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office.
First Sea Lord.
Message Control, War Office.
Registry Telegrams, Air Ministry.
Chief of Combined Operations Staff.
Secretary of State for Colonies.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

ONE TIME PAD

E8050/341/G

Recd 10 June 48

DTO 092015B June

From C-in-C, MELF

To War Office

EMERGENCY

TOP SECRET 81109/G(O)B.

Ref your 14462 (MO4) of 8 June.

ONE Commander-in-Chief, in the light of COS(ME) 247, has decided to send One Coy 2 R.Berks from Asmara to Kenya. With effect from date of arrival at Gilgil, which is approx 14 June, he is prepared to accept full responsibility for guarding detainees. We have instructed HQ East Africa Comd to inform Kenya Govt of this, and to offer to accept the responsibility if the Governor so desires.

TWO We consider that staging the detainees in Cyrenaica for anything but a short while is likely to cause resentment both locally and in other Arab States. Staging Tripolitania with its considerable Jewish population would be even more undesirable.

THREE We do not consider this political repercussion to be a prime factor. We are therefore issuing instructions for the provision of suitable accommodation for the detainees in Cyrenaica (?to) be prepared. This will not be ready until approx 1 July after which date it will be available if future developments require its use.

FOUR You should also see CCL/242 which follows this signal.

Message Control.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Mr. A. V. Alexander
Minister of Defence
to S of S.
12 - 6 - 46
16 - 6 - 46.

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

Last Paper

E 8050

References

E 8050 / 341 / G.

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Action completed)

(Index)

Next Paper

(Minutes)

We are taking this up with the Mediator

JB June 16

① War Office comm'd (Tel to C-in-C MEHF 14867 9/7/6).

4.13.vii

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

FO 371 / 68640

E

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE
Storey's Gate, S.W.1.

E.8129

12th June, 1948

SECRET

Mr Beith

Dear Ernest,

16 JUN 1948

At the request of yourself and the Colonial Secretary, the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, were asked to consider whether the present or potential situation about the retention of the Jewish detainees in Kenya was such that European guards as replacements or reinforcements were urgently required. The Commanders-in-Chief have now replied in telegram No. 242/CCL, a copy of which you have, saying that they have moved one British infantry company from Eritrea to arrive at Gilgil about the 14th of June, and have told the G.O.C., East Africa, to inform the Kenya Government that the Army are prepared to accept full responsibility for guarding the detainees from the time of arrival of the company, if the Kenya Government so desire.

The Commanders-in-Chief have also issued instructions for accommodation to be prepared for the detainees in Cyrenaica in case this will be needed, but the accommodation if started now will not be ready until approximately the 1st of July.

The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, M.P.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

58

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

You will remember that the Staff Conference on Wednesday evening, 9th June, agreed to your suggestion that you should take up with Count Bernadotte - as he had now become responsible for deciding who should be permitted to enter Palestine - the question of the disposal of the Kenya detainees, explaining that they were now being held illegally by us and asking him for a decision. The Chiefs of Staff have, therefore, informed the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, of this action by you, but in order to save a possible waste of labour and materials, have instructed them not to proceed with the building of accommodation in Cyrenaica pending further instructions.

The position as I see it is that if the Mediator can get the agreement of the Jewish authorities to accept the Kenya detainees back into Palestine they may either be transported by ship through the Suez Canal, if the Mediator also gets the agreement of the Egyptians, or by aircraft to Cyrenaica and onwards by ship. On the other hand, there is a possibility that there will be some delay before a solution is reached and if this is so, I am advised by the Chiefs of Staff that they think it would be better to leave the detainees in Kenya under British guard rather than move them to Cyrenaica and risk both the resentment of the local Arabs and of other States.

/

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

58A

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

In these circumstances, I have been asked by the Chiefs of Staff for a decision as to whether or not the accommodation in Cyrenaica is to be built or whether action should be postponed pending a reply from, or a suggested solution by the Mediator.

My feeling is that preparation of accommodation in Cyrenaica should continue to be postponed until we have Bernadotte's reply and arrive at a decision upon it.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Colonial Secretary. If you wish we could discuss the position with him.

Yours sincerely,

A. Alexander

It should be cleared up with mediator before work is commenced in Cyrenaica. Proceed with enquiries

EB

It should be cleared up with mediator before work is commenced in Cyrenaica. Proceed with enquiries.

EB

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

ON THE PAD

BM/2125(MO4)

From :- The War Office

To :- C-in-C MELF

DTO 171725 A/Jun

Desp. 17 June '48.

TOP SECRET 14867. (MO4)

Reference COS(ME)249 .

One . If Mediator agrees to accept Gilgil detainees back into Palestine it will obviously be in our interests to make the move as quickly as possible .

Two . Although method of transport cannot be decided yet it may be necessary to stage detainees in Cyrenaica .

Three . If move is carried out under auspices of Mediator we hope it may be possible to use airfields in Sudan in which case presumably Dakotas could be used and the air lift could be accomplished fairly rapidly .

Four . If however we are forced to use four engined aircraft there may be a lag for as long as three weeks if using civil aircraft and ten to twelve days if using service aircraft between arrival of first and last detainee in Cyrenaica .

Five . Availability of suitable accommodation may be limiting factor . Accommodation need not be so elaborate as that visualised in 242/CCL para 3 . E8050/341/G

Six . Please inform us as soon as possible how long notice you require of move if it is necessary to stage in Cyrenaica .

Message Control.

IMMEDIATE

Copies to:-

S of S	DMI	PUS	Ministry of Defence (Lt.Col.Waterfield)
US of S	DDMI(I)	DP(a)	Colonial Office(Mr Higham)
CIGS	MI 1, 2(c)	DP(c)	Foreign Office (Mr Beith)
VCIGS	VQMG	P 1(2)	Ministry of Transport(Mr.Rennie)
DMO	DD Mov	DPR	Air Ministry ASTO 3 (W.Comd.K.F. Mackie)
DDMO(A)(B)	Col Mov(P)	PR Co-ord	
MO 1, 4(8)	Q(M)2, 8.		

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

ABAN	EXTREME	IM

E8143/341/31/G

Mr Creech-Jones
Colonial office
Comm'd.
4 - 6 - 48
16 - 6 - 48.

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

Last Paper

E 8129

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Minutes)

See Also:

1) Mr Creech-Jones to S of S. of 5 June.
2) Mr T. N. Martin (Colonial Office) to Mr Wright of 7 June.
3) C.O. Comm'd. (Tel from Kenya No. 390 of 7/6)
4) " " (" " " " 397 of 8/6)

See now E 8144.

LT 22:vi

(Action completed)	(Index)
13/7	

Next Paper

34092

FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Nothing to be Written in this Margin.

Sofs

68

260 Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

There is grave objection to our taking any steps, either through the United Nations mediator or otherwise, to send back 260 Jewish gangsters of military age to Palestine during the one month period of cease-fire. There would also be objection to their being moved to the Sudan or Cyrenaica and kept waiting there.

It was suggested at the departmental level some days ago that we should revert to a proposal, considered earlier, that these men should be sent to Palestine in a ship by long sea route. This would mean their arrival about August.

The objections to this suggestion raised by other departments were:-

a) Expense. On the other hand arrangements to fly them by special aircraft from Kenya will also be expensive and any difference in cost would seem to be worthwhile.

b) It was argued that if these men arrive in Palestine after our troops have left, the Jewish authorities may refuse to admit them. As they are Palestine nationals and no doubt to some extent heroes in the eyes at least of extreme Jews, Sir O. Sargent considered that it was most improbable that the Jewish authorities would refuse to accept them, and that little weight need be given to this argument.

The course suggested seems to me to be the lesser of evils.

I like this one more. Deal with it expeditiously

See me tomorrow

MR Wright

5th June, 1948.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Jewish Detainees in Kenya

The Colonial Secretary has suggested that Sir A. Cadogan should be instructed to ask the Arab Delegations in New York if they would agree to the readmission of the detainees even during the cease-fire period.

2. Recommendation.

It is recommended that no action should be taken with the Arab Delegations or with the Mediator, but that the detainees should be given the choice of either remaining in Kenya for another month and then being sent direct either by British warship or by air to Cyrenaica and then by ship, or of starting on their journey at once by flying to West Africa and being taken by ship from there to Palestine.

3. Discussion.

There are very serious objections to any conceivable course of action on this subject and we shall incur severe criticism from one quarter or another whatever we do.

4. With regard to the Colonial Secretary's minute, I feel it would be quite useless to ask any Arab authority to agree to the return of these men.

5. If we ask the Security Council or the Mediator for a ruling whether they should go back the answer would very likely be that they should on the grounds that they are Palestinians who were removed from Palestine under emergency regulations which no longer exist. But in fact our main reasons for not sending them back at once are:-

Surely also the case when military age who were soldiers ought not to be sent into Palestine during the cease fire

(a) We do not want them in Palestine while our troops are still there;

(b) The Arabs will bitterly resent our doing so whatever the legal position may be.

6. There are six physical possible ways of sending them back:-

(1) Direct by passenger ship. This is ruled out because they would not be able to get through the canal without risk of arrest by the Egyptians;

(2) Direct flight. This has also been ruled out because it would be necessary for aircraft to land in Arab territory;

(3) Direct by British warship. This would avoid the immediate difficulty that they might be arrested in Egypt, but if, as is likely, the journey became known there might be a very ugly scene if the Egyptians tried to stop the warship in the canal;

(4) By air to Cyrenaica, thence by ship to Palestine. There would be little difficulty about this provided that they did not have to stay in Cyrenaica. This and the three previous methods would, however, get

/ the ..

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

the detainees back too soon if they started at once.

(5) By air to West Africa and thence by passenger ship to Palestine.

(6) By sea round the Cape.

7. The disadvantages of the long sea route are that there would be no legal means of detaining the men when the ship called for coal at a South African port as it would have to do; the very large expense including loss of dollars and freight; and the very dangerous opening which this would give to hostile propaganda. The last point seems to me to rule out this method. We were more criticised for sending back the "Exodus" Jews to Germany than for almost anything else we have done in connexion with Palestine. The thought of Jewish detainees in a probably small and uncomfortable ship sent on a very long and unnecessary (as it would be represented) journey through the tropics would revive all this criticism in an intensified form, particularly if, as is very likely, there were sickness and deaths on board. We shall have criticism enough about Palestine in any case without offering gratuitous openings of this kind.

I don't think there is much in this argument. The 2 cases are entirely different.

8. Alternative (5) above, (air to West Africa and thence by sea) suffers from the last two disadvantages, though to a slightly smaller extent since the voyage is a good deal shorter. The other difficulty is overcome since bunkering would be at Gibraltar.

9. It seems to me that the best procedure would be to tell the detainees fankly that we could not contemplate their getting to Palestine before, say, a month's time, and that there were obvious difficulties about transporting them back through Arab territory. We would therefore offer them the choice of either waiting for a month in Kenya and then returning either direct by warship, if we felt this was feasible at the time, or more probably by method (4), i.e. by air to Cyrenaica and thence by ship, or, if they prefer to start at once, of flying to West Africa and getting on a ship there which would get them back to Palestine at roughly the same time. If we put the case to them in this way we could avoid much of the criticism of the sea journey from West Africa by saying that the detainees had themselves chosen this method rather than stay another month in their camp and then returning in a more direct method.

7th June, 1948.

I don't like the idea of our capitulating to 260 gangsters. If we do it will, among other things, set a disastrous example to the 23 thousand internees in Cyprus.

I cannot help feeling that the Kenya Government are being incredibly weak and that if told firmly that they must keep these men in order even if it means shooting they will be able to quell this mutiny.

Obviously/

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Obviously from the broad political point of view the only right course for us to take is to keep these men where they are until we can hand them over to some recognised Government or authority in Palestine. Any other course would put us in a false position and land us in all sorts of difficulties.

For instance, to send these gangsters round by sea to Palestine would mean that they might arrive in Palestine just at a moment when the cease fire had been prolonged or was going to be prolonged for another period.

As for asking the Security Council for a ruling, if they told us to send them back and we obeyed, we should be sending men of military age into Palestine in defiance of our own interpretation of the cease fire resolution.

Least of all do I like the idea of parleying with these men, as suggested by Mr. Burrows. I hope therefore that the Colonial Office can be induced to take a strong line with the Governor of Kenya and insist upon his taking appropriate measures to quell the mutiny which these men are threatening.

O. G. Sargent

7th June, 1948.

[illegible] the detainees

[illegible]

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

64

COLONIAL OFFICE,
CHURCH HOUSE,
GREAT SMITH STREET, S.W.1.

1. S of S.
2. Eastern Dept.
PK 5/6

With the compliments of the
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

E8143/G

4th June, 1948.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Great South Street, S.W.1.

Immediate.

E 8143/341/G

Foreign Secretary,

You will have seen the minute I sent to the Minister of Defence earlier to-day on the subject of the Jewish detainees at Gilgil. As I told you yesterday, the Governor of Kenya has reason to think that the situation in the camp has now reached breaking point and that the detainees are in a state of cold-blooded desperation because there is no sign of their move. He reports that these men, some of whom have been in detention for five years, seem bent on creating an incident which must lead to wholesale killing; they state that they do not care if they live or die, and will not attempt to escape to Palestine, but merely to make us slaughter them. Even with due allowance for their hysterical state, the Governor feels unable to disregard their threat and is most seriously concerned at the dangers of the situation, particularly as the military guard is provided by African troops.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

2. It seems unfortunately out of the question to move the Jews back to Palestine just now; nevertheless, in view of the very serious nature of the position, it is most important that we make every possible effort to try to persuade the Arabs, through the United Nations Mediator, to agree to the admission of these 260 men back into Palestine at the earliest moment and during the truce period if at all possible. I understand that the Mediator has now referred the problem of interpretation of the truce provisions regarding immigration back to the Security Council, which is likely to discuss it on Monday. In the circumstances would you consider asking Cadogan to seek an opportunity to raise the question of the Kenya detainees with the Arab delegations and to try to obtain agreement to acceptance of their readmission to Palestine as a case apart.

3. Although they are men of military age, they are in a somewhat different category from both the Cyprus Jews and other would-be immigrants into Palestine. They are either Palestinians or residents of Palestine who were

/deported

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371 / 68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

2. It seems unfortunately out of the question to move the Jews back to Palestine just now; nevertheless, in view of the very serious nature of the position, it is most important that we make every possible effort to try to persuade the Arabs, through the United Nations Mediator, to agree to the admission of these 260 men back into Palestine at the earliest moment and during the truce period if at all possible. I understand that the Mediator has now referred the problem of interpretation of the truce provisions regarding immigration back to the Security Council, which is likely to discuss it on Monday. In the circumstances would you consider asking Cadogan to seek an opportunity to raise the question of the Kenya detainees with the Arab delegations and to try to obtain agreement to acceptance of their readmission to Palestine as a case apart.

3. Although they are men of military age, they are in a somewhat different category from both the Cyprus Jews and other would-be immigrants into Palestine. They are either Palestinians or residents of Palestine who were

/deported

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

departed from that country because they could not be held there in detention owing to local security difficulties. Moreover a very definite pledge was given to them by H.M.G. that they would be sent back to Palestine before the military withdrawal and they were recently given a written assurance that arrangements would be made to start their move from Kenya within one month from the termination of the Mandate.

Further, all our planning arrangements were in hand for the removal of these men and because of the truce discussions were suspended. These men, as Palestinians, do fall in a special category and they form, after all, only a small number.

(Approved in draft by the Colonial Secretary and signed on his behalf at his instructions)

L. Blake-Walker
Private Secretary
5. 6. 48

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Mr Bevin

67

75156/151F/48.
Secret
Immediate

E 8143/341/G

7th June, 1948.

My dear Wright,

My Secretary of State understands that Mr. Bevin is discussing with the Department routes for getting the Jewish detainees in motion from Kenya, and has instructed me to keep in touch with you about this.

Perhaps I should make clear the reasons why despatch by the route round the Cape has been ruled out. These are -

(1) The Ministry of Transport are very reluctant to agree that the OCEAN VIGOUR should be taken away from other work for the 10 weeks required for this operation. This would increase the difficulties of providing shipping for the military evacuation of Palestine and would involve the hiring of American tonnage at a cost in dollars equivalent (at a rough estimate) to £50,000, in addition to the £20,000 which would be the cost of the voyage round Africa.

(2) The Jews would presumably not go willingly on such a round-about journey. Military guards would be necessary and there would no doubt be all sorts of complaints about conditions on the ("hell") ship with hostile propaganda in the United States and elsewhere.

(3) The ship would be bound to call either at some foreign port or in South Africa to bunker. Within the territorial waters there would be no legal power to detain the prisoners. In British Colonies this difficulty could be overcome by special legislation, but we cannot expect any foreign Government or the Government of South Africa to legislate for such a purpose.

(4)

M.R. Wright, Esq., CMG.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(4) There is at the moment no certainty that at the time of arrival in the Eastern Mediterranean it would be possible to land the prisoners in Palestine. It would be no less inconvenient, so far as we are concerned, in such circumstances to detain them in Cyprus than it is to continue their detention in Kenya: indeed the present Cyprus camps are not intended for the close guard of prisoners of this kind.

The principal reasons why the alternative of flying the men to Lagos and taking them on from there by sea are that -

(1) There would be considerable difficulties in guarding the men in transit in Nigeria, where (so far as is known) no suitable camp exists (particularly if they were non-co-operative and obstructive and behaved like the passengers on the "EXODUS" at Marseilles last summer) and special legislation would have to be enacted.

(2) The Ministry of Transport objection to giving up a ship for an operation taking several weeks, though less than in the case of the voyage round Africa, still exists.

(3) The problem referred to in point (4) above would arise after only some 5 weeks from embarkation at Lagos.

Of course, if you feel able to agree to a move to Cyrenaica the difficulties would be greatly lessened, but we understand that Foreign Office have hitherto seen insuperable political objections to detention in that territory.

There has been further news from Kenya which makes our problem even more difficult. I have asked for a meeting tomorrow morning at which we can discuss this.

(J.M.Martin)

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

IMMEDIATE

68

Minister of Defence

The Governor of Kenya has represented in the strongest terms the danger of serious disturbances in the Jewish detention camp at Gilgil, if the movement of these 260 men back to Palestine is not begun by the 15th June, in accordance with the written undertaking given by the Government of Kenya on the 14th May. (See my minute of the 26th May).

2. The Foreign Secretary and I discussed this question yesterday and decided that, in view of the Palestine truce arrangements, it was out of the question to move the Jews back to Palestine for the present. The Governor has been informed accordingly. I have discussed the renewed representations from the Governor with the Foreign Secretary today and, while we have agreed that yesterday's decision must stand, the Foreign Secretary has undertaken to do his utmost by representations through the United Nations Mediator, to see if agreement can be obtained to admission of these Jews into Palestine at the earliest possible date.

3. In the meantime, the Governor advises that, exasperated by five years of detention and by uncertainty as to their future, these men are in a mood to create such an incident as must lead to wholesale killing. As you are aware, the only military guard are black troops with white officers and I need not enlarge on the effects on world opinion should a "massacre" occur in such circumstances. Control of the Jewish prisoners would obviously be easier if European troops were available to reinforce the present guard (who are confined to the outer perimeter) and I would ask that instructions may

/be

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
References:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

be sent most urgently to the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, to arrange in consultation with the G.O.C. for the despatch by air of immediate reinforcements. The Foreign Secretary, to whom I am sending a copy of this minute, strongly supports this request.

(Sgd.) A. Creech Jones.

5th June, 1948.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371 / 68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

Cypher (O.T.P.)

FROM KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

D. 7th June, 1948
R. 7th " " 15.20 hrs.

MOST IMMEDIATE

No.390 Secret and Personal

Jews, noted.

Your secret and personal telegram No.406,

I will keep you informed and will of course do everything in my power to avoid tragedy.

2. Command here have been informed by Middle East that no Prison Staff Corps men available and company of infantry offered instead. We have confirmed here and are unanimous such men could not carry out the duties of internal staffing of camp and their introduction for the purpose would lead to bloodshed.

3. Special internal staff at the camp become time-expired on 19th June next. I am informed that maximum of 5 likely to be re-engaged. Remainder have stated that they refuse. Replacement is therefore necessary and if Middle East cannot supply, War Department or some other source of U.K. must do so by air at once.

4. Law Members will visit the camp today and inform inmates that their move is delayed by conditions of truce expected to be agreed to by what they regard as their Government in Palestine. If truce not agreed or breaks down move will proceed at once. Meantime we will do all in our power to ease conditions of detention. Law Members will ask detainees to suggest extent to which they are willing to co-operate. I am not hopeful that they will be content with anything less than leave out of the camp which is impossible.

5. If truce delayed or breaks down, trust that you will at once authorise move which, if necessary, can be done by charter from here and could be all over in 3 days. Trust also you will try to persuade Jewish Agency to give directive to these men to be patient.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office	-	Mr. M. Wright
" "	-	Mr. Burrows
" "	-	Mr. Beith
War Office	-	Lt.Col. Charteris

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E8141/341/G

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

Cypher (O.T.P.)

FROM KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

D.8th June, 1948.
R.8th " " 11.35 hrs.

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 397 Secret.

Your secret telegram No. 408.

Jews.

Law Members, accompanied by Somen (see my top secret telegram No. 383 of 4th June) and Irvine ("A" branch East African Command) visited Gilgil Camp yesterday, and interviewed the Action Committee. He informed them as in paragraph 5 of my secret telegram No. 390. They then asked if they might consult and the Law Member and Irvine withdrew, leaving Somen.

2. After half an hour they intimated readiness to see the Law Member again and he returned. They protested that they were victims of high politics, that the truce had not even been signed, that there were no real reasons why they should not return, except that somebody was deliberately preventing it. They were sullen and angry and stated that faith had been repeatedly broken with them and that they were not prepared to believe anything any more that the British authority told them. They had no suggestions to make for easing the tension and plainly had no wish to have anything more to do with the Law Member or Kenya Government, but said that they would return to the camp and hold full camp meeting to discuss the matter. Law Member said that he would remain at Gilgil for at least an hour in case they wished to see him and would return at any time if they wished to communicate with him. Before leaving, Law Member asked them if they would like Somen to return to the camp, and they advised him to keep out of it. After more than an hour and a half, no communication having come from the camp, Law Member returned to Nairobi.

Following signal dated 8th June just received from Commandant of Camp. Begins.

"Quiet night. Meeting going on. Sullen." Ends.

3. International Red Cross Representative has arrived. He points out that his mandate is not conciliation but to help with family affairs and later to escort party if necessary through Arab country. He was in the camp all yesterday and has returned to the camp today. His visit has in fact been most helpful and I have no doubt has assisted to ease the tension.

4. Law Member thinks that if the truce and interruption of immigration agreed by the Jewish authorities in Palestine detainees may accept the position for a short time, but that delay in achieving proposed truce, or refusal to stop immigration by Jewish authorities, or breakdown in the truce, will at once create situation in which, unless orders to move are

given/

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

17 JAN

given at once, tragedy will occur. Most likely action is thought to be mass attempt to walk calmly out of the camp, leaving guards in fact no option but force, and, since batons and tear gas are unlikely to suffice with such desperate men, force must be expected to mean shooting.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office	-	Mr. Beith.
" "	-	Mr. B.A.B. Burrows.
War Office (M.O.4.)	-	Lt.Col. Charteris.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

F.O. Minute
(Mr. Roberts)
9 – 6 – 48
16 – 6 – 48.

Withdrawal from Haifa:
Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

Last Paper

E 8143

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Minutes)

See within

9.22:vi

(Action completed)	(Index)
6m 13/7	W/1.

Next Paper

FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Sir O. Sargent
Mr. Wright
Mr. Burrows

Action taken

E8144

At a meeting between the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State and the Minister of Defence this evening the following decisions were reached:-

1. Haifa

There would be no interference with the present arrangements under which we would get our troops out by the end of June. There was no need to make any announcement to this effect as we had always said that we should get them out as soon as possible. The Secretary of State will consider to-morrow whether we should say anything to the Mediator or to the Arab Governments.

2. Kenya Detainees

As soon as we know that the truce has been accepted and is to come into force, the Secretary of State will take up with the Mediator this question on the lines that we had undertaken that these detainees should leave Kenya on June 15th, and that we assumed that the Mediator would agree to their return to Palestine as their land of origin and clear the matter with the Jews and Arabs. Sir P. Mitchell could be told what we were doing.

9th June, 1948.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E 8243/3047/91

M/Defence Commd.

17 - 6 - 48.

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

(Tel from G.H.Q. MELF No. 81455/MIL of 12 June)

Last Paper

E 8242

References

(Minutes)

LT. 22:vi.

(Print)

(How disposed of)

Tel) Cairo 1030
17 June

Repeated to:
U.K. Del. New York 2697
Wshn. 6538
Rhodes 14
Jerusalem 225
Haifa 131

Saving:
Amman 53 Baghdad 61
Beirut 69 Damascus 67
Jedda 61 BMME Cairo 154.

(Action completed)

(Index)

Next Paper

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E

Enter.

74

I have told the C.O.
this draft must stand but
have removed Kenya from
the repetitions
Bermuda says you wish
to make some verbal amendments.
The draft could not be extracted
from Chris Mayhew earlier when
I asked the S/S what had
passed he said he would
not deviate from this draft

PH 17/6

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E8243 / 75

Disposal of Jewish Detainees in Kenya

I attach two different versions of a draft telegram to H.M. Ambassador at Cairo asking him to take the matter up with Count Bernadotte. The first version (A) is a redraft, prepared in the Foreign Office, of the original version (B) which was prepared in consultation with the Colonial Office and agreed to by them. The Colonial Office have not yet concurred in the Foreign Office redraft (A) because they feel that it does not press the Mediator to accept the detainees back but merely lays the matter before him, which is as far as we would wish to go at the present delicate stage of the cease-fire.

The Colonial Office are pressing the original version of this telegram on the grounds that their Minister understood from the Secretary of State that we would urge the Mediator to receive the detainees in Palestine. The matter is therefore submitted to the Secretary of State for a final decision.

Jos Burns
(BRITH)
15th June, 1948.

BARBarrow
15.6

I am strongly in favour of Draft A, which was /approved

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

approved by Sir O Sargent.

The Colonial Office draft involves informing the Mediator that we are afraid of an incident in the camp at Kenya; - a most shameful admission

McLaughlin
15.6

I very much hope that we will insist upon draft A and not allow ourselves to be forced by the Colonial Office to tell the Mediator that we cannot keep order in a British colony. Besides, the facts about the danger of disorder and blood-shed etc. are no longer true, to judge by the attached telegram.

O Sargent June 15

S/S agreed with Col. Sec. to send draft A: Sent
JB June 17

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Addressed to [redacted]

repeated for information to U.K. Del. New York, Washington, Jerusalem, Kenya, Haifa.

Please convey communication in following terms to Count Bernadotte. Begins.

254 Jews from Palestine are now detained in Gilgil Camp, Kenya. These men were originally detained in Palestine under Palestine Emergency Regulations on suspicion of being members of terrorist organisations or engaged in terrorist activities. In 1944 they were transferred to Eritrea for safer custody, and early in 1947 moved to Kenya.

2. Some of these men, who are all either Palestinians or domiciled in Palestine have been in detention for up to 8 years and, not unnaturally, they looked forward to being sent home on the termination of the Mandate. Public statements have indeed been made by the Govts. of Palestine and Kenya that it was intended to send them home and the men were given assurances only last month that arrangements would be made for them to leave Kenya by the 15th June.

3. Arrangements which had been made to send them by air, starting on the 10th June, on the first stage of their journey to Palestine were suspended as His Majesty's Government were anxious to do nothing which might compromise the success of the negotiations for a cease fire.

For/

Telegram.

No......

(Date).....

Repeat to :—

U.K. Del. New York
Washington
Jerusalem,
Governor, Kenya
Haifa

~~*En Clair.*~~
~~*Code.*~~
Cypher.

Distribution :—

Political

Copies to :—

Palestine distrn.

(135568) Wt. 43897-140 100m 3/47 G.S.St. Gp 620

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[illegible] the [illegible] where prompt steps are taken to repatriate [illegible] to prevent an incident which would force the guards to open fire, and would lead to serious bloodshed. The reasons for the delay have been explained to the men but it is not expected that they will acquiesce in this position for more than a short time.

4. His Majesty's Government request the Mediater to be so good as to consider the question urgently in consultation, as he may think fit, with the competent Jewish and Arab authorities, and to convey the necessary authorisation to His Majesty's Government for the repatriation of these detainees to Palestine. In view of the obligations of His Majesty's Government towards the detainees, the assurances given to them in regard to repatriation and the importance of avoiding a serious incident in Gilgil Camp, it is hoped that Count Bernadotte will be able to give the earliest possible reply to this request. Ends.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

RECEIVED BY O.T.P.

IZ 1500
TOO 121145B
(120945Z)
TOR 122018Z

IMMEDIATE

From : G.H.Q. M.E.L.F.

To : Ministry of Defence, London

81455/MIL 12th June, 1948.

Secretary Commanders-in-Chief Committee to Secretary Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Further to 242/CCL of 10th June.

1. Latest information from Nairobi is that

A. Civil warders are prepared to re-engage in increasing numbers as a result of promised backing by British troops.

B. Kenya Government, in light of this, is willing to retain responsibility for internal guarding of detainees.

2. British infantry will be used to

A. Reinforce or possibly relieve African external guard.

B. Stiffen internal guard if so requested by Kenya Government.

C. Provide guards for detainees when they are moved to Cyrenaica.

CIRCULATION TOO 121145B

D.C.O.R.
Foreign Office
First Sea Lord
Message Control, War Office
Registry Telegrams, Air Ministry
Chief of Combined Operations Staff
Col. Leischinig, Colonial Office

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

RECEIVED BY O.T.P.

17 JUN 1948

IZ 1500
TOO 121145B
(120945Z)
TOR 122018Z

IMMEDIATE

From : G.H.Q. M.E.L.F.

To : Ministry of Defence, London

81455/MIL

12th June, 1948.

Secretary Commanders-in-Chief Committee to Secretary Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Further to 242/CCL of 10th June. — f 8050/341/G.

1. Latest information from Nairobi is that

A. Civil warders are prepared to re-engage in increasing numbers as a result of promised backing by British troops.

B. Kenya Government, in light of this, is willing to retain responsibility for internal guarding of detainees.

2. British infantry will be used to

A. Reinforce or possibly relieve African external guard.

B. Stiffen internal guard if so requested by Kenya Government.

C. Provide guards for detainees when they are moved to Cyrenaica.

CIRCULATION

TOO 121145B

D.C.O.R.
Foreign Office
First Sea Lord
Message Control, War Office
Registry Telegrams, Air Ministry
Chief of Combined Operations Staff
Col. Leischinig, Colonial Office

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

REGISTRY
No.

REPETITION OF TELEGRAMS.

CYPHER

(Date)

(Despatched)

(1) TELEGRAM SECTION,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

Please repeat to the posts shown below telegram No. 1030

~~from~~ to TO CAIRO dated 17th June

RHODES. as an Immediate TEL.

No.

(Date)

No.

No.

(Signed) Ian Philcott

~~En clair~~
~~Code~~
Cypher

(Dept.) Eastern

(Date) 25. June 48.

(2) DIVISION CONCERNED (FOR ARCHIVES).

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUT FILE

[redacted]

Draft.

H.M. Ambassador
Cairo

Telegram.

No. 1030

(Date) June 9. 47.

Repeat to :—

U.K. Del. New York 2697.
Washington 6538.
Jerusalem 225.
~~Gordonson, Kenya~~
Haifa 151.

SAVING.
AMMAN 53. SAV:
BAGDAD 61. SAV:
BEIRUT 69. SAV:
DAMASCUS 67. SAV:
JEDDA. 61. SAV.
B.M.E.O. CAIRO. 154. SAV.

~~En Clair.~~
~~Code~~
Cypher.

Distribution :—
Political

Copies to :—
Palestine distrn.

Despatched 9.20 pm

Addressed to Cairo telno. 1030 of 11th June
repeated for information to U.K. Del. New York,
Washington, Jerusalem, [redacted], Haifa. and saving to
Amman Bagdad Beirut Damascus Jedda TAMRO

Please convey communication in following terms to Count Bernadotte. Begins.

254 Jews from Palestine are now detained in Gilgil Camp, Kenya. These men were originally detained in Palestine under Palestine Emergency Regulations on suspicion of being members of terrorist organisations or engaged in terrorist activities. In 1944 they were transferred to Eritrea for safer custody, and early in 1947 moved to Kenya.

2. Some of these men, who are all either Palestinians or domiciled in Palestine have been in detention for up to 8 years and, not unnaturally, they looked forward to being sent home on the termination of the Mandate. Public statements have indeed been made by the Governments of Palestine and Kenya that it was intended to send them home and the men were given assurances only last month that arrangements would be made for them to leave Kenya by the 15th June.

3. Arrangements which had been made to send them by air, starting on the 10th June, on the first stage of their journey to Palestine were suspended as His Majesty's Government were anxious to do nothing which might compromise the success of the negotiations for a cease-fire.

4./

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(13556) Wt. 43667-140 100m 3/47 G.S.St. Gp 620

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

4. His Majesty's Government request the Mediator to be so good as to consider the question urgently in consultation, as he may think fit, with the competent Jewish and Arab authorities, and to give his views to H.M.G. with regard to the repatriation of the detainees. In view of the obligations of H.M.G. towards the detainees and the assurances given to them in regard to repatriation, it is hoped that Count Bernadotte will be able to give the earliest possible reply to this request. If Count Bernadotte recommends that they should be moved to Palestine, H.M.G. will arrange the necessary transport but they assume that Count Bernadotte will take the necessary steps to ensure that the Jewish authorities are ready to receive them and that the Arab authorities will not make difficulties.

5. The route to be followed by the detainees requires consideration. The most convenient route would be by ship through the Canal or by air with landings in Egypt. If both of these methods are politically undesirable, the alternative is by air to Cyrenaica and thence by sea. If Count Bernadotte would like us to arrange the journey this way we will endeavour to do so.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[redacted]

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

No. 1020
17th June, 1948. D. 9.20 a.m. 18th June, 1948.

Repeated to U.K.Del. New York No. 2697
Washington No. 6538
Jerusalem No. 225
Haifa No. 131
Amman No. 53)
Baghdad No. 61)
Beirut No. 69) Saving
Damascus No. 67)
Jedda No. 61)
B.M.E.O.Cairo No. 154)

IMPORTANT
SECRET

Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 1030 of 17th June repeated for information to United Kingdom Delegation New York, Washington, Jerusalem, Haifa and Saving to Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda and British Middle East Office Cairo.

Please convey communication in following terms to Count Bernadotte.

[Begins]

254 Jews from Palestine are now detained in Gilgil Camp Kenya. These men were originally detained in Palestine under Palestine Emergency Regulations on suspicion of being members of terrorist organisations or engaged in terrorist activities. In 1944 they were transferred to Eritrea for safe custody, and early in 1947 moved to Kenya.

2. Some of these men, who are all either Palestinians or domiciled in Palestine have been in detention for up to 8 years and, not unnaturally, they looked forward to being sent home on the termination of the Mandate. Public statements have indeed been made by the Governments of Palestine and Kenya that it was intended to send them home and the men were given assurances only last month that arrangements would be made for them to leave Kenya by the 15th June.

3. Arrangements which had been made to send them by air,

/starting on the

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[illegible] the [illegible] Count on the first [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] to be [illegible] which might [illegible] the [illegible] of the negotiations for a cease-fire.

4. His Majesty's Government request the Mediator to be so good as to consider the question urgently in consultation, as he may think fit, with the competent Jewish and Arab authorities, and to give his views to His Majesty's Government with regard to the repatriation of the detainees. In view of the obligations of His Majesty's Government towards the detainees and the assurances given to them in regard to repatriation, it is hoped that Count Bernadotte will be able to give the earliest possible reply to this request. If Count Bernadotte recommends that they should be moved to Palestine, His Majesty's Government will arrange the necessary transport but they assume that Count Bernadotte will take the necessary steps to ensure that the Jewish authorities are ready to receive them and that the Arab authorities will not make difficulties.

5. The route to be followed by the detainees requires consideration. The most convenient route would be by ship through the Canal or by air with landings in Egypt. If both of these methods are politically undesirable, the alternative is by air to Cyrenaica and thence by sea. If Count Bernadette would like us to arrange the journey this way we will endeavour to do so.

F F F F

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

82

OUT FILE

starting on the 10th June, on the first stage of their journey to Palestine were suspended as His Majesty's Government were anxious to do nothing which might compromise the success of the negotiations for a cease-fire.

4. His Majesty's Government request the Mediator to be so good as to consider the question urgently in consultation, as he may think fit, with the competent Jewish and Arab authorities, and to give his views to His Majesty's Government with regard to the repatriation of the detainees. In view of the obligations of His Majesty's Government towards the detainees and the assurances given to them in regard to repatriation, it is hoped that Count Bernadotte will be able to give the earliest possible reply to this request. If Count Bernadotte recommends that they should be moved to Palestine, His Majesty's Government will arrange the necessary transport but they assume that Count Bernadotte will take the necessary steps to ensure that the Jewish authorities are ready to receive them and that the Arab authorities will not make difficulties.

5. The route to be followed by the detainees requires consideration. The most convenient route would be by ship through the Canal or by air with landings in Egypt. If both of these methods are politically undesirable the alternative is by air to Cyrenaica and thence by sea. If Count Bernadotte would like us to arrange the journey this way we will endeavour to do so.

F F F F

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

1948 PALESTINE

[redacted]

[redacted]

No. [redacted]

Dated 19 Jun 48

Received in Registry 21 Jun 48

[redacted] that, as far as we know to 3d July, the [redacted] would not consider that the return of the Levys constituted a breach of the cease-fire since they were residents of Palestine.

(Repeated to U.K. Del New York, Washington and Haifa)

Last Paper.

E 8243

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8) Palestine dist (u/c E 8404) June 23

(Minutes.)

T 21:vi.

In P.P. 60 tel to Kenya 436 17/6
- Kenya tel to C.O. 427 18/6.

1030 to Cairo ~~103~~ (Gil-Gil Jews) & 1036 to Cairo (Cyprus Jews) have already been repeated to HAIFA, as Has Sir H Dow's Tel: within. I attach a draft hastener to RHODES on both questions: & have told Mr HIGHAM of the C.O. that it will be going off shortly.

Ian Rutledge
25:vi.

B.U. 28:vi.

J G S Beaty
June 25

Replies have now been received on both points from Rhodes. Draft therefore cancelled

H.T.B. 29/6

See within
CO letter to Burrows 75156/151A/48 of 24/6

T. 1:vii

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

E 8560

32003 F.O.P.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

8 34/31 84

REGISTRY No.

REPETITION OF TELEGRAMS.

(Date)

(Despatched) M.

CYPHER

(1) TELEGRAM SECTION,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

Please repeat to ~~the~~ posts shown below telegram No. 195

from/~~to~~ JERUSALEM dated 19th June

RHODES No. (Date)

No.

No.

(Signed) Lancelot Oliphant.

~~En clair~~.

~~Code~~

Cypher

(Dept.) East

(Date) June 25th

(2) DIVISION CONCERNED (FOR ARCHIVES).

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

34/31

84

REGISTRY No.

REPETITION OF TELEGRAMS.

(Date)

(Despatched) M.

(1) TELEGRAM SECTION,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

Please repeat to ~~the~~ posts shown below telegram No. 195

from/~~to~~ JERUSALEM dated 19th June

RHODES No. (Date)

No.

No.

(Signed) Lancelot Russell.

~~En clair~~.

~~Code~~

Cypher

(Dept.) East

(Date) June 25th

(2) DIVISION CONCERNED (FOR ARCHIVES).

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

No. 8342/41/31

L. T.

[Secret]

Draft.

Rhodes

Telegram.

Repeated to:

Haifa
Cairo

James Rickell
25.vi.

H J Burt
June 25

Cypher

Distribution:

Departmental

Copied to:

Mr. Higham.
Colonial Office.
Col. Charteris
War Office. M.A.4.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

June, 1948.

Despatched

M

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

Addressed to Rhodes telegram No. of June. Repeated for information to Haifa and Cairo.

My telegrams Nos. 1030 [Gilgil Jews] and 1036 [Cyprus Jews] to Cairo repeated to you ~~and~~ as my telegrams Nos. ___ and ~~No.~~ 6.

2. ~~Will you please contact~~ Inform the Mediator ~~and ask him for an immediate~~ that I should be grateful for an early reply ~~decision~~ on the questions raised in these two telegrams. Decision on Gilgil ~~Jews had earned additional~~ detainees ~~is~~ ~~text~~ is particularly urgent owing to ~~urgency by~~ the fact that the Palcor Agency has reported the Mediator as saying that he regards these detainees as ~~potential~~ repatriates, ~~and~~ not ~~potential~~ immigrants, and therefore ~~there is no objection to their return~~ not affected by immigration clauses of the truce conditions, and

This information is ~~bound to come to~~ likely to reach ~~the case of~~ the Gilgil detainees and cause trouble in the camps. ~~fairly soon.~~

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Sir K. Row.
No. 195.

D: 12.12 p.m. 19th June, 1948.

19th June, 1948.

R: 2.30 p.m. 19th June, 1948.

Repeated to: U.K.Delegation New York,
Washington,
Cairo,
Haifa,
Amman Saving,
Bagdad Saving,
Beirut Saving,
Damascus Saving,
Jedda Saving,
B.M.E.O.Cairo Saving.

E 8342
21 JUN 1948

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 195 June 19th repeated for information U.K.Delegation New York, Washington, Cairo, Haifa, Saving to Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda, B.M.E.O.

3324/341

Your telegram No. 1,030 to Cairo.

17/6

Kenya detainees.

Both Kol Israel and Kol Yerushalaim said yesterday evening that on his visit to Tel Aviv the Mediator had said he did not consider that the return of detainees would be a breach of the cease-fire since they were residents of Palestine.

Foreign Office please pass to U.K.Delegation New York, Washington and Haifa as my telegrams Nos. 14, 12 and 8 respectively.

[Repeated to U.K.Delegation New York, Washington and Haifa].

@@@

21 JUN 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

P. 87

E

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

E 8742, 341 R1

Cypher (O.T.P.)

22 JUN 1948

FROM KENYA (Governor's Deputy)

D. 18th June, 1948.
R. 18th " " 15.45 hrs.

INDEXED

IMPORTANT

No. 427 Secret

Your secret telegram No. 436 dated 17th June.

Gilgil Jews.

I have no observations except to say that I greatly trust negotiations will be pressed to a very early and satisfactory conclusion.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith
" " - Mr. B.A.B. Burrows
" " (News Dept.) - Mr. Matthews

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

R. W. E 88

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

75156/131F/48

Cypher (O.T.P.)

8242 741 31

TO KENYA (Sir P. Mitchell)

Sent 17th June, 1948. 10.00 hrs.

INDEXED

IMPORTANT
No.436 Secret.

Gilgil Jews.

In reply to Press enquiries here I propose to say that detainees have been informed by Governments of Kenya on instructions from H.M.G., that their repatriation to Palestine has been delayed by the terms of the Cease-Fire Agreement and that the problem is being referred to the United Nations Mediator. Have you any observations?

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith.
" " - Mr. B.A.B. Burrows.
" "(News Dept.)-Mr. Matthews.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

89

Colonial Office,
Church House,
Great Smith Street,
S.W.1.

My Reference 75156/151A/48.

Your Reference .....

8342 341 3(24th June, 1948.

Mr Beith

Dear Burrows,

I am writing to confirm our telephone conversation this morning in which I drew your attention to a Palcor Agency Report date lined Tel Aviv June 18th, which reads as follows:-

> "After the Foreign Minister had discussed with Count Bernadotte the problem of the 260 Kenya deportees, who were to have been returned to Palestine in June but are held by the British on the grounds that they are of military age, the mediator stated at his news conference that these men were not immigrants but repatriates, and were therefore not affected by the immigration clauses of the truce conditions".

It is inevitable that this and other similar reports will come to the notice of the men in Gil Gil Camp and bring about a renewal of the tension there. You said that you would see no objection to sending a further communication drawing Count Bernadotte's attention to this report and asking for an early reply to your telegram No. 1030 to Cairo.

P.S. draft [illegible]

I should be grateful if you would let me know that a telegram is to be despatched as I

/should

B.A.B. BURROWS, ESQ.,
FOREIGN OFFICE.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

should like to send a brief telegram to Kenya telling them of this further development.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Charteris.

Yours sincerely

John Higham

(J.D. Higham).

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

F.O. Minute
(Mr. Thirkell)
23-6-48
24-6-48.

Repatriation of the Gilgil Jews:
Record of a meeting at the War Office.

Last Paper
E 8243

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Minutes)

See within

(Action completed)
20/7

(Index)
Mgt.

Next Paper

34092

FOREIGN OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

E 8[illegible] / G
24 JUN 1948

[illegible] Mediator.

Only two means were considered to be really practicable:-

I - A direct lift to Palestine by the RAF

This would be bad from our point of view as it would involve a night stage in the Sudan, but is in any ~~way~~ unlikely to take place, because the Air Ministry are very doubtful whether they any longer have the airfield facilities in Palestine which they would require for such a lift. This they are going to confirm.

II - The previous plan which looked the least unacceptable of those described in these papers - i.e. air lift from Kenya to Cyrenaica and thence by boat to Palestine.

This the Air Ministry say would probably be done by six Yorks which would take five days to get to Nairobi after the Mediator had given his approval, and a further four days to move the detainees and their ~~goods~~ guards from Kenya to Cyrenaica. (This would be done in two lifts.) The use of RAF aircraft would involve a brief stage somewhere in the Sudan. Civil aircraft which could do the journey in one hop cannot be obtained; but a brief stage in the Sudan may be the least unacceptable of a number of evils with which we will be faced if the Mediator gives his approval for the return of the undesirables.

James Thirkell.
L. G. THIRKELL

23rd June, 1948.

I don't think we need object to route II if the Mediator approves the return of the men.

Egyptian Dept. H. S. Beith
June 23

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[illegible] there for a long time. It is [illegible] that we are doing our best to secure and retain the goodwill of the local Arab population and in view of the vital importance to us of Cyrenaica, it seems to me that all alternative plans should be exhausted before a decision is finally taken to route these people through Cyrenaica. It is worth mentioning, moreover, that there has recently been a fairly serious clash between Arabs and Jews in Benghazi and it is doubtful whether the plan could go through without some repercussions on the local security situation.

I.W. Bell.

24th June, 1948.

P.S. I have shown the above minute to Mr. Pansary, who entirely agrees.

24/6.

Provided (as they originally were) the military authorities are satisfied that these Jews can be safely routed via Cyrenaica, then let them go that way. I have not seen a report of the Benghazi clash, but I gather it was not very serious. I hope, however, the Sudan Govt. are being kept informed of these plans which I now see involves a landing in the Sudan. They may well have views.

S.L. Clutton
25/6.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

At yesterday's meeting at the W.O. I gathered that the Gil-Gil detainees wd: only have to spend a couple of days in Cyrenaica, so I do not think we need be unduly concerned. Cin C M.E.L.F. who gets all W.O. telegrams about the Gil-gil detainees passes them on to the Khagid, so that the Sudanese military authorities will know what is going on. I do not know whether anything will have to be done in Cairo shd: the detainees need to stage in the Sudan.

James Thicknell. 28:vi.

Egyptian Dept.

See now E. 8661 (attached).

Yes Berry
June 28

G. 5:vii

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

SECRET

IN 914

PW. E

WARNING: This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher or confidential code message and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.
(*Note: Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad: "O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

3+1

RECEIVED IN O.B.
= 6 JUL 1948
S.M. TO DEP.

From: S.B.N.O.M.E.

022017B/July

Date: 2.7.48.

Recd: 2042

CINCHEX

To: C. in C. Med. Malta, C. in C. Med. Afloat

Info: C. in C. E.I., Admiralty

IMPORTANT

C. in C. Med. Afloat 021243. Escort for transport is considered necessary. OCEAN VIGOUR is due Tobruk to embark detainees a.m. 7th July and it is anticipated that she will sail for Haifa that night.

022017B

✓ Whether one of H.M. Ships is considered necessary to escort transport for C.O.S.M.E. 258.

1st S.L.(3)
V.C.N.S.
M.(2)
D.N.I.(5)
O.D.(8)
D. of P.(2)
D. of P.(Q) (2)
D. of S.T.(10)

Min. of Defence
(Lt.Col. Waterfield
St. George St.)
C.O. - Mr. Higham
P.O. - Mr. Beith
Air.Min. A.S.T.O.S.
(Wing Cdr. Mackie)
W.O. - MO4 Lt.Col. Chapteris

Mr. W. Graham
D.O.S.T.
Mr. A.H. Carter
Mr. R. Brenchley
Mr. A.G. Peckett
Mr. H.C. Wills
Mr. F.G. Rennie
Mr. J.H. Willis
2 File copies

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[redacted]

(*Note: Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad, "O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

RECEIVED IN O.B.
= 6 JUL 1948
SENT TO DEPT.

Distribution of this message is to be limited to those Officers who are concerned with its contents

TOP SECRET M E S S A G E 02173(illegible)/July IN

From: P.S.T.O. Med.
To : D. of S.T. London
Info: C. in C. Med. (Afloat Malta)

Date: 2.7.48
Recd: 2138

I.S.G.

IMMEDIATE

Am informed detainees to be flown in one lift to arrive Tobruk 7th July.

2. Intend use OCEAN VIGOUR in view of imminence of movement. She is much more suitable ship having standees and can provide full feeding with adequate space for guards. Estimated time of departure Port Said 5th July.

3. Request confirmation destination in Haifa.

4. Agreed.

0217303

D. of S.T. (3)

Mr. W. Graham
D.O.S.T.
Mr. A.H.Carter
Mr. R. Brenchley
Mr. A.G.Pocket
Mr. H.C.Wills
Mr. F.C.Rennie Action
Mr. J.R.Willis
Min. of Defence. Lt.Col.Waterfield
(Great George Street)
C.O. - Mr. Higham
F.O. - Mr. ~~Beith~~
Air Min. A.S.T.O. 3
(Wing Cdr. Mackie)
W.O. - M.O.4 - Lt. Col. Charteres
2 File copies.

FB

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

TOP SECRET

WARNING: This is an unparaphrased version of a secret cypher message, and the text must first be paraphrased* if it is essential to communicate it to persons outside British or Allied Government Services.

TOP SECRET : Messages shown as having been sent in a One Time Pad "O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.

From: PSTO Med

To : D. of S.T. London

M E S S A G E 011230B/July IN

Date: 3.7.48

Recd: 0845

Have discussed your 231545 with GHQ. consider it is practicable to hold detainees on board to await arrival second flight but only possible ship is soup tea hard rations.

2. For passage with 290 detainees conditions would be uncomfortable with sitting accommodation on wooden forms but voyage time only 3 days maximum. This is considered suitable and GHQ agree subject our concurrence any possible complaints later will not embarrass HMG.

3. If movement arranged by 2 voyages suggest interval should be 8 days to allow for possible delays to vessel and assuming Jewish authorities Haifa will accept their immediate disembarkation.

4. Agreed.

5. Understand COS ME signal being sent on same subject.

Mr. W. Graham
D.O.S.T.
Mr. A.H.Carter
Mr. R. Brenchley
Mr. A.G.Pockett
Mr. H.C.Wills
Mr. F.C.Rennie ACTION

Mr. J.R.Willis
Min of Defence, Lt.Col.Waterfield (Great George Street)
C.O. - Mr. Higham
F.O. Mr. Beith
Air Min. A.S.T.O. 3 (Wing Cdr. Mackie)
W.O. - M.O.4 - Lt. Col. Charteris
2 File copies
Extra.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
References:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(Note: Messages shown as having been sent in a One-Time Pad "O.T.P." are excepted from this rule.)

26 JUL 1948
SENT TO DEP.

TOP SECRET

M E S S A G E

OUT

021704/July

From: D. of S.T.
To : P.S.T.O. Middle East W/O

Date: 2.7.48

With further reference to my 231545 you should consult G.H.Q., Middle East who have been advised by cable C.O.S.M.E. 258 of 1st July on movement to Palestine of Kenya detainees.

2. If Cyrenaica is used and air lift made in one flight you should arrange for use of "EMPIRE REST" for Sea Movement. If two or more flights involved we have no objection to use of "OCEAN VIGOUR" if impracticable to use "EMPIRE REST" if holding detainees pending arrival of later flights.

3. Please report in due course shipping arrangements made.

TOO. 021704.

(Sgd.) F.C. Rennie
Ext.3653.
for D. of S.T.

Mr. W. Graham
D.O.S.T.
Mr. A.H.Carter
Mr. R. Brenchley
Mr. A.G.Pockett
Mr. H.C.Wills
Mr. F.C. Rennie
Mr. J.R.Willis
Min. of Defence, Lt. Col. Waterfield
(Great George St.)
C.O. Mr. Higham
F.O. - Mr. Beith
Air Min. A.S.T.O. 3 (Wing Cdr. Mackie)
W.O. - M.O.4 - Lt. Col. Charteres
2 File copies.

FB

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Dated 28. 6. 48

Received in Registry 29. 6. 48

[illegible] Palestine Mission [illegible] received the application in [illegible] from Mr. Marriott at Haifa, [illegible] text of the reply made by the Mediator to Mr. Marriott on 26th June.

Last Paper.

E 8667.

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8) Palestine Distr. 29 June
Tel) Khartoum 180 17 July
Rptd to: Cairo 1124
B.M.E.O. Cairo 704
8) Palestine Distr. 5 July.
Tel) Haifa 239 5 July.
Rptd to: Cairo 1142
U.K. Del. N.Y. 2890, Wilta 7278, Jerusalem 313

OVER.

(Action completed.)

24/7

(Index.)

Next Paper.

(Minutes.)

Please see separate minutes attached

H.B. 29/6

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Volume 76(S).

8) Palestine Desk. 7 July

Tel) Cairo 1178 9 July

Rptd. B.M.E.O 753

Baghdad 754

Jeddah 601

Amman 662

Beirut 579

Damascus 478

Haifa 295

Wilton 874(S)

U.K. Del. N.Y. 225(S)

Jerusalem 21(S).

8) Palestine Desk.

13 July.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:-

FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUT FILE.

Cypher/OTP.

Confidential. [redacted]

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO.

No. 1178.

9th July 1948.

D. 2.15 p.m. 9th July 1948.

Repeated to: B.M.E.O. No.755;
Baghdad, No.754;
Jedda, No.601;
Amman, No.662;
Beirut, No.579;
Damascus, No.478;
Haifa, No.295;
Washington No.874 Saving;
U.K. Delegation New York No.225 Saving;
Jerusalem No.21 Saving.

IMMEDIATE.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed to Cairo telegram No.1178 of 9th July, repeated for information to B.M.E.O., Baghdad, Jedda, Amman, Beirut, Haifa and Damascus, and Saving to Washington, United Kingdom Delegation New York and Jerusalem.

My telegram No.1030 [of June 17th: Jewish detainees in Kenya].

Mediator replied that provisions for the Truce Agreement related to immigration and that the repatriation to Palestine of previous residents could not be interpreted as immigration. He regarded the matter as one for settlement between His Majesty's Government and the Jewish authorities and asked only to be informed of the date and place of the detainees' arrival in Palestine.

2. Movement of the party by air to Cyrenaica and thence by ship to Palestine has now begun and publicity has mistakenly been given to it. The move cannot be kept secret but no (repeat no) publicity should be given. If you or other of His Majesty's Representatives are questioned about our action you can explain that the matter was cleared with the Mediator and that His Majesty's Government had no grounds for further detention of these Jews after the termination of the Palestine Mandate.

W:W:W:W:W

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Draft.

Telegram to :—

Cairo

No. 1178

(Date) July 9.

Repeat to :—

BMEO 753
BAGDAD 754
JEDDA 601
AMMAN 662
BEIRUT 579
DAMASCUS 478.
HAIFA 295
SAVING TO:
WASHINGTON 8792
U.K. DELEGATION NEW YORK 2594
JERUSALEM 24
~~HAIFA~~

Bs. Beirut July 8

Cypher.

Distribution :—

Political

RECEIVED IN O.B.
12 JUL 1948
SECRET DEPT.

Copies:

Palestine Distribution

[Security classification —if any] CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to ~~B.M.E.O.~~ Cairo

telegram No. 1178 (date) 9/7

repeated for information to BMEO ~~Cairo~~, Bagdad, Jedda, Amman, Beirut, HAIFA and Damascus, and Saving to Washington, U.K. Delegation New York, and Jerusalem, ~~and Haifa~~.

My telegram No.1030 ~~[illegible]~~ [of June 17th: Jewish detainees in Kenya]

Mediator replied that provisions for the Truce agreement related to immigration and that the repatriation to Palestine of previous residents could not be interpreted as immigration. He regarded the matter as one for settlement between His Majesty's Government and the Jewish authorities and asked only to be informed of the date and place of the detainees' arrival in Palestine.

2. Movement of the party by air to Cyrenaica and thence by ship to Palestine has now begun and publicity has mistakenly been given to it. The move cannot be kept secret but no repeat no publicity should be given. If you or other of H.M.R.R. are questioned about our action you can explain that the matter was cleared with the Mediator and that His Majesty's Government had no grounds for further detention of these Jews after the termination of the Palestine Mandate.

HB 9/7

1030

(34615) Wt.34892/152 50,000 12/47 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
Reference:-
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUT FILE

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

No. 259
5th July, 1948 D: 5.50 p.m. 5th July, 1948

Repeated to: Cairo (Embassy) No. 1142
New York (U.K.Del.) No. 2890
Washington No. 7278
Jerusalem No. 515
B.M.E.O. No. 716

Saving to: Amman No. 65
Bagdad No. 76
Beirut No. 82
Damascus No. 82
Jedda No. 76

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Haifa telegram No. 259 of 5th July, repeated for information to Cairo Embassy, United Kingdom Delegation New York, Washington, Jerusalem, B.M.E.O. and Saving to Amman, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Jedda.

Your telegram No. 174 [of July 4th: Kenya detainees]

Commanders in Chief Middle East have been asked to inform you through B.M.E.O. of the date of arrival as soon as final arrangements are made. You should then notify the Mediator's office at Haifa and the Jewish authorities.

G G G G

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Registry No. EF 752/341/3

~~Top Secret~~
~~Secret~~
Confidential.
~~Restricted~~
~~Open~~

CYPHER

OUT FILE

Date 5/7

Despatched 3.30 p.m.

Draft. Tel.

Haifa 239 July 5th

Repeat Cairo Emby 1142
UKD. N York 2890
Washington 7278
Jerusalem 313
BMEO 716

saving to
Amman 65 SAV
Baghdad 76 SAV
Beirut 82 SAV
Damascus 82 SAV
Jedda 76 SAV

Minor Sept (
cypher
Copies Palestine
distn.
1.50 PM

IMMEDIATE

CONFL.

Add. Haifa No. 239 of 5/7
Rep. for info. Cairo Emby,
UKD. N. York, Washn.
Jerusalem BMEO saving
to Amman Baghdad Beirut
Damascus Jedda

Your td. No. 174 [of
July 4 : Kenya detainees]

~~Inasmuch as the Jewish authorities have taken this matter up with~~

Commanders in Chief
Middle East have been
asked

RECEIVED IN C.B.
6 JUL 1948

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(2/47) (14728). Wt 11489—144 250m 5/47 G.S.St.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

asked to inform you through OMEO of the date of arrival as soon as final arrangements are made. You should then notify the Mediator's office at Haifa and the Jewish authorities

JB July 5

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Reference:- FO 371/68640

COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

OUT FILE

102

Cypher/OTP
E 6758/341/31
Confidential

POLITICAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO KHARTOUM

No. 180

D. 7.55 a.m. 2nd July, 1948.

1st July, 1948.

Repeated to Cairo No. 1124
B.M.E.O. (Cairo) No. 704

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Khartoum telegram No. 180 1st July repeated for information to Cairo and B.M.E.O. (Cairo).

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

It has now been decided that these detainees should be returned immediately to Palestine. The first stage of their journey will be by air. This movement had been planned to be carried out by Yorks to avoid, if possible, the difficulties arising out of staging stops in the Sudan. Unfortunately, all Yorks are now urgently required for Berlin commitments, and we must rely upon Dakotas, which are medium range. Staging stops would probably have to be made at Juba, Khartoum and Wadi Helfa, and there would be a night stop in the Khartoum area.

2. The Service authorities in the Middle East would make the detailed arrangements for this movement, and would keep you fully informed. I recognise that it would be an embarrassment for the Sudan Government to have to hold these detainees for a night stop, but there is no other practicable way to return them rapidly to Palestine. I am recommending to the Service authorities that airfields remote from centres of population should so far as possible be used i.e. Wadi Seidna South instead of Khartoum Airfield. Military guards would accompany the detainees. Since the latter are extremely anxious to return to Palestine they can be expected to make no trouble.

3. Please telegraph immediately whether you agree.

///

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Draft.

Telegram to :—

Khartoum.

No. 180

(Date) July 1st

Repeat to :—

Cairo, ~~B.M.E.O.~~ No 1124

BMEO No 704

2 draft tels.

CO., WO., A.M. & Mny. of Defence concur

Egyptian Dept. first

Tgs Beirut June 30

Will it be clear to Khartoum who & ~~En Clair~~ ~~Code~~ Cypher. how many they are? 9!! not some lost much of the corr. they have had.

Distribution:—

Political GLMD 3/6.

Copies to:

Palestine.

Yes. Khartoum know all about them & have had them in transit before JB today!

H. Bailey 1/7

RECEIVED IN O.B. 3 JUL 1948

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

[Security classification —if any] CONFIDENTIAL.

Addressed to Khartoum.

telegram No. 180 (date) 1 July

repeated for information to Cairo, and B.M.E.O.

~~My Telegram [redacted] Haifa of~~

Jewish Detainees in Kenya.

~~I have~~ It has now been decided that these detainees should be returned immediately to Palestine. The first stage of their journey will be by air. This movement had been planned to be carried out by Yorks to avoid, if possible, the difficulties arising out of staging stops in the Sudan. Unfortunately, all Yorks are now urgently required for Berlin ~~operation~~ commitments, and we must rely upon Dakotas, which are medium range. Staging stops would probably have to be made at Juba, Khartoum, Wadi Helfa, and there would be a night stop ~~at Khartoum~~ in the Khartoum area.

2. The Service authorities in the Middle East ~~will be making~~ would make the detailed arrangements for this movement, and ~~will no doubt~~ would keep you fully informed. ~~of details.~~ I recognise that it ~~will~~ would be an embarrassment for the Sudan Government ~~of Khartoum~~ to have to hold these detainees for a night stop, but there is no other practicable way to return them rapidly to Palestine. ~~I trust, therefore, that you will be able to make the necessary arrangements.~~ I am recommending

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

(4615) Wt.84888/152 50,000 12/47 A.& E.W.Ltd. Gp.685

[redacted]

Since the latter are extremely anxious to return to Palestine they can be expected to make no trouble.

3. Please telegraph immediately whether you agree.

J.B. July 15th

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:-
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on]
Cypher/OTP

POLITICAL DISTRIBUTION

104

FROM RHODES TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Hoyland
No. 9

D. 1.00 p.m. 28th June, 1948

R. 2.16 p.m. 28th June, 1948

28th June, 1948

E 8752

SECRET

E 3324/341

29 JUN 1948

Your telegram to Cairo No. 1030: Kenya detainees.

Communication was made to the Mediator who informed me that the application in identical terms had been received from Mr. C. Marriott at Haifa. Following is text of the answer made by the Mediator to Mr. Marriott on June 26th.

[Begins]

My position on this matter as already stated to the Jewish authorities at Tel Aviv is that provisions for the Truce Agreement relates to immigration and that the return or repatriation to the country of bona fide citizens or residents cannot be interpreted as immigration.

Question of the desirability of their return is a matter for decision of the Jewish authorities in consultation with your Government and therefore no question of my recommendation as suggested by you is involved. If arrangements are made by your Government for the return of any or all of these detainees I would expect to be given full information of the number being repatriated, route by which being sent and the place and date of arrival, in order that United Nation observers may make the fullest check on the right of each individual to enter the country under the terms of the Truce Agreement. [Ends].

uuuuu

29 JUN 1948

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Rhodes Telegram No.9:
Return of the Kenya Detainees to Palestine.

Put with telegram

The Mediator has now confirmed to us the view which had already been attributed to him on this subject by Mr Shertok, namely that these "bona fide citizens or residents" cannot be regarded as immigrants to Palestine. He suggests that their return is a matter for His Majesty's Government and the Jewish Authorities but he would like notice of the arrangements of their return so that he can check the detainees on arrival.

Count Bernadotte has not, as we suggested in our message to him, cleared the matter with the Arabs. It therefore remains for us to consider whether we should consult the Arabs ourselves or simply send the men back, since the Mediator has no objection and implies that these men in his view have a right to return to Palestine. I consider that there would be no advantage in taking this matter up with the Arab League or the Arab Governments. They would be bound to object as a matter of principle. This does not however mean that they have any locus standi in the matter. These Palestinians cannot be left on the hands of His Majesty's Government and their unfortunate Colonial Governors indefinitely. The only proper course is to return them to the Jewish area of Palestine. There are only 250 of them and, as the Mediator has pointed out, their return is not strictly speaking a question of immigration. As a matter of fact, the Arab Governments should realise that in the light of the recent troubles between the Jewish Authorities and their extremists the return of these men is likely to be a serious embarrassment to the Jewish Authorities.

In previous minutes it has been explained that these detainees were arrested without formal trial under war time emergency regulations by the Government of Palestine. His Majesty's Government have not the right to detain them indefinitely. The Colonial Office have to answer a Parliamentary question on June 30th on this subject and I understand that they will be pressing this department on a high level to agree, for the purpose of this Parliamentary reply, that the men can now be returned.

There remains the question of the route. The only practicable route at present is to send the men by Dakotas to Tobruk and thence by sea to Haifa. The only snag here is that the Dakotas, being medium range aircraft, will have to make a night stop at either Khartoum or Wadi Halfa. This is an embarrassment but I suggest that the Military Authorities can make the necessary arrangements for guarding the men. I submit that there is still time to send the detainees back without undue complications but that if we delay further we risk increasing our difficulties vis-a-vis the Arabs and vis-a-vis the Governor of Kenya.

J.G.S. Beith

J.G.S. Beith
29th June, 1948.

I agree

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

RECEIVED IN O.B.
6 JUL 1948

I agree with Mr. Beith. I think it would be a mistake to consult the Arabs, since they would be bound to refuse, and we should be equally bound to override their refusal sooner or later. Nor do I think the Arabs will greatly resent our action if we return the Jewish detainees to Palestine now as part of the routine winding-up of our mandate.

H Beeley 29/6

I agree.

Sir O Sargent approves. The Jews should be approached verbally through Mr Goldmann

MEL
29.6

Mr Goldmann is away and I spoke to Mr Linton, who confirmed that the Jewish auths. were very keen to have these people back.

Draft tel.s

H S. King
June 30

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE
Reference:- FO 371/68640
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAPH - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON